LEARNING / F1
LIFESTYLE / C5
BUSINESS / B1
SPORTS / A31

Aquino backs Singson on Pagcor deal

By Christian V. Esguerra

PRESIDENT AQUINO yesterday threw his support behind Public Works Secretary Rogelio Singson over a deal the Cabinet official had struck with Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) when he was the top official of a private firm.

Aquino said he had spoken separately with Singson and the head of the state gambling firm to inquire about the report that the public works secretary, then president of Mountain Water Services

AQUINO, A4

Green lessons from Mauka to Makai in Hawaii

Lope K. Santos' 1906 novel 'Banaag at Sikat' gets the indie-rock treatment

DPWH returns P17B in excess funds

Unheralded Filipino rules Guinness 10-ball, pockets $40,000

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Monday, August 2, 2010 ★★ 10 sections / Vol. 25 / No. 235 P18

Gun lovers find champion in Noynoy

STANDING AMID an array of foreign assault rifles and local shotguns at one of the country's largest shopping malls, firearms aficionados celebrated the rise of President Aquino.

Mr. Aquino, who took office on June 30, is an avid sports shooter and clips on YouTube show him using a semiauto-

GUNLOVERS, A12

Noy steps into PAL row

President defends truth commish

By Christine V. Esguerra and Christine O. Avendaño

PRESIDENT AQUINO yesterday said the Supreme Court would have the final say on the legality of the Philippine Truth Commission, as more lawmakers joined in knocking the drive the body he had formed to punish the corrupt under the Arroyo administration.

Mr. Aquino defended his decision to set up the commission and indicated that he was not backing down despite calls for him to give way to Congress on the issue.

"The one that would decide which opinion is correct is the Supreme Court, if the issue would be elevated before it. That will be the right venue," he told reporters in Filipino.

"So far, we think what we're

PRESIDENT, A10

CORY REMEMBERED President Aquino prays at the tomb of his mother, Corazon Aquino, at Manila Memorial Park in Sucat, Parañaque City, during her first death anniversary. NONOY NOVILLO

People from all walks of life honor Cory

By Christian V. Esguerra, Jeannette I. Andrade and Pia Zamora

A YEAR after her death, tributes to the late President Corazon "Cory" Aquino came in many poignant forms—from a President who vowed to uphold his mother's legacy to a retired policeman who got up early just to be could sing many of her favorite songs by her tomb.

Priests and nuns in many parts of the country led thousands in prayer. A mayor of a small Visayas town noted that, out of sheer gratitude for Cory's "sacrifices," he and his people made sure tribute billboards put up when she died remain mounted to this day.

And many more Filipinos from all walks of life honored the Lady in Yellow by simply donning her signature color and flocking to the different memorials yesterday despite the threat of heavy rains.

President Aquino led one of several rites celebrating the heroism of his mother, who led the 1986 People Power uprising that restored Philippine democracy, and whose death from colon cancer at age 76 last year

PEOPLE, A20

Truth body told: Take no prisoners

By Amando Doronila

THE PHILIPPINE Truth Commission established by President Aquino narrowly defined its mandate as "dedicated solely to investigating and finding out the truth concerning the reported cases of large-scale graft and corruption" during the Arroyo administration.

Executive Order No. 1 directed the commission to "put a clo-

TRUTH, A13

ANALYSIS

Gov't sets meetings with pilots, airline

By Christian V. Esguerra and Paolo G. Montecillo

PRESIDENT AQUINO has stepped into the dispute between Philippine Airlines (PAL) and 25 pilots who have moved to higher-paying jobs abroad, causing PAL flights to be delayed or canceled and passengers stranded.

The President announced yesterday that the PAL management would sit in a meeting today with Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa and the secretaries of departments, such as transportation, labor and justice, to tackle the matter.

A separate meeting will be held with pilots who had left PAL to join bigger airlines, he said.

"The said point being to address the situation and in remind everybody—PAL, for instance—that they have obligations when they secured the franchise to operate this public conveyance," Mr. Aquino said.

The President said "the pilots also have an obligation. This is being studied with pertinent laws."

He scolded both the management and the pilots over what he called "disruption" caused by the mass exodus of the latter in the past two weeks.

"There has been disruption to our tourism efforts and to other aspects of the economy that would need their services," Mr. Aquino said. "If this is not (resolved), they (will) lay themselves open (to) ap-

NOY STEPS, A15

Kris gets a sermon from archbishop

By Christian V. Esguerra

KRIS AQUINO will find true happiness, but not where she's looking.

This is not a clairvoyant's prediction: It is the counsel of one of the most trusted spiritual advisers of the high-profile and controversial TV celebrity.

Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Socrates Villegas pulled off a surprise toward the end of his homily yesterday during a Mass commemorating the first death anniversary of President Corazon C. Aquino, the mother of Presi-

dent's and Kris' mom, who is the family's true superstar.

Bishop Soc said, addressing Kris: "Your beauty and talents are not yours; they are God's. Remember, all of these things shall pass. You will find your real hap-

KRIS, A24

'OVERWHELMING EMOTION'

Clintons celebrate a summer wedding

CHELSEA'S WEDDING Newlyweds Marc Mezvinsky (left) and Chelsea Clinton are shown with the bride's mother, Hillary Rodham Clinton, and father, former President Bill Clinton. AP

RHINEBECK, New York—It was high security inside and high security outside as Chelsea Clinton wed her longtime boyfriend at an elegant estate in a Hudson River village where several prominent guests were spotted beforehand, but the husband-and-wife-to-be stayed out of sight.

The wedding site, a Beaux Arts riverside estate called Astor Courts, was sealed off from the general public.

Despite confidentiality agreements, anonymous hotel reservations and a no-fly zone over the area, however, this moneyed and normally subdued town on Saturday turned into a Chelsea theme park, with shop windows filled with homage to the bride, including one with a live model in a wedding dress having her makeup done.

Former President Bill Clinton and US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton issued an announcement via e-mail at 7:23 p.m. that

CLINTONS, A13

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: The eastern section of Northern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy or cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Kalayaan	Mostly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Mostly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Cotabato	Mostly Cloudy
Aparri	Mostly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Mostly Cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Mostly Cloudy
Legaspi	Mostly Cloudy	Iligan	Mostly Cloudy
Catarman	Partly Cloudy	Surigao	Mostly Cloudy

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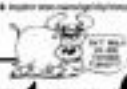

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'GMA pushed water firm contracts'

MWSS execs say ex-President asked them to extend Maynilad, Manila Water deals

By Gil Cabacungan

FORMER President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo pressured some officials of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) into granting a 15-year extension to its private concessionaires—Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water Co. Inc.—before the end of her term, two top MWSS officials have claimed.

The MWSS sources said they received, on separate occasions, phone calls from the former President herself telling them of her support for the contract extensions before she passed the phone on then Trade Secretary Peter Favila, who continued to lobby for the contract extensions with the regulators.

The sources said that the National Economic and Development Authority Department of Trade and Industry and Department of Finance had mapped up the process on MWSS to approve the applications for extensions since 2007 "on an avail. It was the same year Metro Pacific and DMCI Holdings took over the cash-strapped Maynilad from the Lopez group which run the concession deeper into debt after winning it in 1997.

Mr Arroyo had to make the calls because the MWSS was sitting on the applications of Maynilad and Manila Water for an extension, said the sources, who refused to be identified due to the sensitive nature of their revelation.

The DBNS since 2007 has balked at granting an extension to Maynilad and Manila Water in the middle of their 25-year contracts for the West and East zones, respectively, without a binding end for a relatively modest compensation and in view of their spotty record in complying with their commitments in the concession.

The sources claimed that the MWSS had long maintained that there was no legal basis for extending the 25-year contracts before they ended until the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel (then headed by former Justice Secretary Alberto Agra) came up with an opinion that the extension could be given in the middle of the contract last year.

This paved the way for the approval of Manila Water's contract extension in December and Maynilad's extension in April, or a few months before Mrs Arroyo stepped down from office.

Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Teodoro Casiño has called on President Aquino to suspend and review the extension of the 1997 contracts of Maynilad and Manila Water to 2037.

"President Aquino should suspend and review the rejected 15-year extension of Maynilad and Manila Water's concession contracts scrupulously given only by the Arroyo administration. Such an extension would be an injustice considering their non-performance," Casiño, especially Maynilad," Casiño said.

Malakanyang Rep. Rafael Mariano filed House Resolution 189 calling on Congress to conduct an investigation into the contract extension granted by the MWSS to Maynilad and Manila Water and to undertake a comprehensive review of their operations that had been deteriorating as seen from the lingering water shortage problem, even as they continued to impose high or water rates on the public.

"It is imperative that Congress exercise its oversight functions and conduct an extensive review of the MWSS Concession Agreements with Maynilad and Manila Water. Issues occupy view this as a first possible step toward the establishment of a more propeople policy of water services," Mariano said in his resolution.

It remains to be seen how the President would act on the demands for suspension or review of the MWSS contract extensions considering that two member of his Cabinet—Public Work Secretary Rogelio Singson and Energy Secretary Jose Rene Almendras—boards of Maynilad and Manila Water, respectively, only a month ago.

Also, the two utilities are owned by some of the country's richest and most influential groups—Metro Pacific Investments Corp. of Manuel V. Pangilinan for Maynilad, and DMCI Holdings Inc Mayniladand the Ayala group for Manila Water—said to be among the biggest, seasoned backers of President Aquino's campaign.

NUMBERS TELL THE STORY Presidents Aquino unveiled yesterday a marker in front of the blackboard at the La Salle Green Hills gym that will show the figures of the National Citizens Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) quick count for the 1986 snap election that former President Corazon Aquino won over strongman Ferdinand Marcos. The occasion was the Mass commemorating the first death anniversary of the President's mother.

It's a fragile Senate alliance under Enrile, says Miriam

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE ALLIANCE formed by the senators under Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile is "very, very fragile."

This was the warning to Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, who reckoned that the alliance would not last long as both Liberal Party and Nacionalista Party senators would likely challenge Enrile's leadership.

Santiago yesterday said the senators would, for now, keep the "status quo" on a show of goodwill to the month-old administration of President Aquino. However, she said that leadership challenges were inevitable and did not discount the possibility the ongoing Senate committee reorganization could lead to more disputes.

Enrile, meanwhile, said he expected the Senate to resolve the chairmanship of two remaining committees within the week.

The Senate president had been tasked to decide who would head the committees on public services and energy.

Senators Loren Legarda and Serge Osmeña III are competing for the chairmanship of the energy committee, while the public services committee is being contested by Senators Ralph Recto and Ramon Revilla Jr.

Guingona to blue ribbon

The chairmanship of the blue ribbon committee had been swallowed in favor of neophyte Sen. Teofisto Guingona III, who had given up his bid to head the energy committee.

Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III said five senators would elect today the leaders of committees that were "non-controversial" so that the chamber could start working.

Currently on medical leave, Santiago, who is planning to join the Senate minority bloc, told *DZRH* radio that the leadership issue in the Senate was not a settled issue.

"The story is not yet finished," she said, saying that the senators agreed to support Enrile after they failed to get the needed numbers to install either the LP's Francis Pangilinan or the NP's Manuel Villar Jr.

And that is why, Santiago said, one can expect that "in the coming months, the LP or the NP will still attempt or get the 13 [votes of senators]."

Santiago said that some of the Senate presidents had been able to deep well in the last six years because suspicion that "a group of senators wanted to fire their master, they would launch a coup or overthrow the incumbent."

Asked if the squabbles for the committee chairmanships could become a barrier in the bid for a leadership change, she said they were actually a "big factor."

"Even if the senators go for the status quo, that will not change things. Some senators will be angry; some will feel that the distribution of the committee chairmanships are truly the devil's headwork in the Senate," Santiago said.

Willing to help Aquino

She also said the other senators wanted to show that they were willing to help the President, who in turn, wants the chamber to be united.

"It's very, very fragile," Santiago described the current alliance.

She said even the four LP senators in the chamber realized they could not get the "lion's share" of the committees because all the other senators would feel that was unfair and would not like it.

Interviewed over the same radio program, Enrile said the chamber would be able to fill within the week the 37 committee chairmanships at stake.

Enrile said that Santiago, as well as detained Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and fugitive Sen. Panfilo Lacson, would be given committee chairmanships.

Trillanes would again head the civil service committee and member committee that Enrile could not remember.

As for Lacson, he would head the accounts committee and another committee, the Senate president said.

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Retirements trigger reshuffle in national police hierarchy

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE PHILIPPINE National Police (PNP) yesterday announced that eight senior officers had been appointed to key posts in the organization following some retirements.

Police Director Raul Castañeda was appointed Director for Intelligence while Metro Manila police chief Director Roberto Rosales now heads the Directorate for Integrated Police Operations in Southern Luzon.

Police Director Leocadio Santiago Jr. replaced Rosales as Metro Manila police chief.

Also appointed were Chief Supt. Alex Paracale, as head of the Central Luzon police office; Chief Supt. Ansell Revilla, as eastern Visayas police director; and Chief Supt. Cynthia Cay, as director of the PNP Special Action Force.

Chief Supt. Ary Lascañas was appointed PNP comptroller while Crime Laboratory Director Arturo Cacdac heads the Directorate for Investigative and Detective Management.

The latest revamp in the police organization was a result of the retirement of a number of senior officers in key positions, said Director General Jesus Verzosa yesterday in a statement.

Deputy Director General Edgardo Acuña, deputy chief for operations, retired from the service on Friday, "triggering an upward movement of senior officers in the leadership chain," Verzosa said.

The new designations, which took effect yesterday, were approved by Verzosa and Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo, said PNP spokesperson Senior Supt. Agrimero Cruz Jr.

More than 40 mid-rank officers are slated for retiring this year due to the mandatory retirement age of 56 years, he said.

HARAP na dapat malaman ng lahat: Mag-isang sa pinaka-malaki ang monopolyo sa port industry. Nilabanan nila ang OPEN COMPETITION sa PORT OPERATIONS upang ang handling cost sa daungan ay hindi bumaba. Nang sa gayon ang kinikamal nilang lalo na mabuhang patuloy ay yumot ay walang maitutumbas. Dahil dito, ang presyo ng bilihin ay lalo-yang lumalaki, ang kawawang Pilipino ay lalo pang naghihirap at ang pag-unlad ng Pilipinas ay nahahadlangan.

Ito ang kanilang layunin: Ipagpatuloy ang kanilang pagbabalewala sa port at alisin ang naglalatong gawing pinoy at mas kapaki-pakinabang ito sa higit na nakararami.

Huwag payagan ang kanilang maniobrang gawain. Ang nasa at nananagot na Pilipinas ay ating magmamalasakit sa kasalukuyan ng buhay nang sa gayon ang mga mamamayang Pilipino ay makakuha sa kahinapan at Diyos ang siyan lang magpapalibre ng kasunggalingan, nawalang port at pamayanan sa katotohanan para lamang mapaworik ang kanilang pinagarding interes.

Nakakatakot lumabas sa monopoliya at malansa

Ang Tunay na Rason

THE DREAM of President Corazon C. Aquino in 1992 was finally realized in 2003, when 2,360 families finally found a home they could call their own. In 2000, The Supreme Court declared the Smokey Mountain Project as a contract with valid legal grounds. To wit:

"Based on the issues raised in this petition, we find that the March 10, 1995 JVA between NHA and RBI, and the SMDRP embodied in the JVA, the subsequent amendments to the JVA and all other agreements signed and executed in relation to it, including, but not limited to, the Sept. 26, 1996 Smokey Mountain Asset Pool Agreement and the Agreement of the Project as well as all other transactions which emanated from the Project, have been shown to be valid, legal and constitutional."

— Decision of the Supreme Court Division in G.R. No. 140975 entitled "Chua vs. National Housing Authority"

Ano talaga ang nasa likod ng paninira laban sa Smokey Mountain Project?

Idineklarang "valid, legal and constitutional" ang Smokey Mountain Development and Reclamation Project (SMDRP) noong 2007 sa pamamagitan ng Supreme Court 13-0 decision. Labing-labing justices ang sumang-ayon, walang sumalungat.

Now Why Would Smokey Mountain Project Detractors Fabricate Lies about the Project

Some sectors in the port industry are wary of the fast growth and efficiency of Harbour Centre Port Terminal Inc. under the chairmanship of Bagbis M. Ikaneze-II.

Nababahala ng Harbour Centre ang presyo ng handling cost at tatlawasan ang sila ng mga bihasa-hasan sa daungan. Nakita nila ang banting pagbawa sa monopolyo. They saw it as a threat to the Kingdom at the Pier!

Competition is tearing down their huge income for years and they could not hold down their anger. It was written in a newspaper column that former MIDA Secretary **Romulo Neri**, who was supporting open competition at the port, was threatened in a Palace party by a Port Operator who declared: "Over my DEAD BODY sasabi Harbour Centre get a container load ibalose sa Palace ang mga pantalan sa Philippines!"

Isang nakakatakot na bantu ngunit para sa kapakanan ng buong at ng mamamayan, kailangang maisulagan upang maibalik ang presyo sa dangan na makapagpapababa ng bilihin at mabagpagpasaulad ng buyan.

Control of the ports through monopoly — HIGH AND TUNOY NA RASON at wala nang iba.

THE CONTROL OF PORT BY MONOPOLISTS MEANS MAINTAINING HIGHER PRICE OF COMMODITIES BECAUSE OF HIGH COST OF HANDLING AND TRANSPORT COSTS.

Kaya malinaw na malinaw, pinipigilan nila ang pag-unlad ng Harbour Centre sa ani pa nang pamamaraan, habit pa maeting ng port, magbanggaling, at magbanawaring, walang dinalaw ang kanilang mga salapi ang mga ito. Ang mga ito ay wala na sa Korte Suprema.

Breaking a monopoly can be this dirty and devious, but we hold on to the truth.

Let the TRUTH speak for ITSELF ! It is not the Smokey Mountain Project the detractors are after but a protection of their monopoly. Halatang-halata ang kanilang kasinungalingan, panininira port at pangkokolso. Iyong-pakita nila ang kanilang pinoorsa, gumagawa sila ng malaki pera sa paid advertisement at iba pang pamamaraan upang mabuguguhitan ng kulay sa kompetisyon. Saan ba galing ang ginagastos nila kundi sa pawis at dugo ng maralitang Pilipino!

Here are the Facts vs the Lies

1. Pinalitan ng mga nasimino na ang halaga raw ng proyekto ay P211 million lamang.

FACT at ang totoo : The Smokey Mountain Project's cost was pegged at six billion six hundred ninety-three million three hundred eighty-seven thousand three hundred sixty four pesos (P6,693,387,436). Certified and Accepted ng NHA at ng DPWH na category itong contract amount na ito. Ang mga ito ay pinahintulutan na dinesisyon ng Korte Suprema.

" ... under the agreement, the stipulated cost for the Smokey Mountain Project was pegged at six billion six hundred ninety three million three hundred eighty-seven thousand three hundred sixty four pesos (P6,693,387,436) "

2. Hindi raw natapos ang proyekto.

FACT at ang totoo : The independent validation of accomplishments were certified by the Department of Public Works and Highways. This was acknowledged by the National Housing Authority with the subsequent turnover of homes to the 2,510 family beneficiaries.

These photographs say it all.

"The land reclamation was completed in August 1996."
— Based on the Supreme Court Decision in G.R. 140975 entitled "Chua vs. National Housing Authority"

"The NHA reported that thirty four (34) temporary housing structures and twenty one (21) permanent housing structures had been turned over by respondent RAY BUILDERS INC., 2,510 beneficiary families belonging to the poorest of the poor had been resettled in their permanent homes and benefited from the Project." — Based on the Supreme Court Decision in G.R. 140975 entitled "Chua vs. National Housing Authority"

3. "Midnight deal" daw ang pagpirma ni MDA para sa kabuyarun ng mga obligasyones sa Asset Pool.

FACT at ang totoo : Ang pagbigil ng contractual obligations sa Smokey Mountain Project ay midnight na sampung taon (10 years) na ang nakkaraang mula nang ito ay natapos. The courts (both the Manila Regional Trial Court and the Court of Appeals) affirmed that contractual obligations have not been complied with by the Home Guaranty Corporation and the NHA. The courts have recognized the prudence of appointing a receiver so that all obligations can be settled, all creditors paid and all debtors made to pay.

4. Maipagtalan daw ng kanilang panggagamit ang pagpapatupad ng mga kasunduan sa Smokey Mountain Project.

FACT at ang totoo : The Supreme Court has ruled with finality on the legality, validity and constitutionality on the Smokey Mountain Project with a decision 13-0.

"With regard to the prayer for prohibitory, enjoining/ mandatory particularly respondents Regby M. Ikaneze-II, NHA et al. from further implementing and/or enforcing the said Project and other agreements related to it, and from further demising and/or enjoying any rights, privileges and interest from the Project, we find the prayer MERITLESS."

ANG IBIG SABIHIN, HINDI PUWEDENG PIGILAN ANG IMPLEMENTASYON AT PAGPAPATUPAD SA MGA KONDISYON NG AGREEMENT KASAMA ANG MGA BAHAY NA DAPAT IBINIGAY SA RAY BUILDERS, ANG DEVELOPER NG PROYEKTO.

5. Di raw maaapat na ang Smokey Mountain Project ay nagsalabas na BOT Law.

FACT at ang totoo : The OGCC stated: "Succinctly, the Smokey Mountain Project was a program adopted by the National Government for the implementation under the auspices of the BOT Law.

It is a state policy declared under section 2 of the BOT law "to recognize the indispensable role of the private sector as the main engine for national growth and development and provide the most appropriate incentives to mobilize private resources for the purpose of financing the construction, operations and maintenance of infrastructure and development projects normally financed and undertaken by the government."

6. Paulit-ulit na ginagalit ang mahirang na deklarasyon ng Korte Suprema ukol sa mangyari na pagtuloy ng Smokey Mountain Project. Wala na bang hanggan ang ganitong panggigigalit at panlalaban ?

FACT : The Supreme Court made it clear there is a time limit to contempt against the Smokey Mountain Project which has been settled since cloudburst, among others.

"Such cession of bad faith are not present in the instant case: the Smokey Mountain Project Case is where petitioner filed the instant case against respondents on August 5, 2004, the Project was already completed.... the respondents (NHA, R-II Builders and Regby Ikaneze-II) had no reason to think that their agreements were unconstitutional or were questionable, as in fact, THE CONCURRENT ACT OF THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT LENT VALIDITY TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT. The Smokey Mountain Project agreements have produced vested rights in favor of the SLUM DWELLERS, THE BUYERS OF RECLAIMED LAND WHO WERE ISSUED TITLES OVER SAID LANDS AND THE AGENCIES AND INVESTORS WHO MADE INVESTMENTS IN THE PROJECT OF WHO BOUGHT SUBSIDIAL INSTRUMENTS. These properties and rights CANNOT BE CONTURBED AND QUESTIONED after the passage of around ten (10) years from the start of the project implementation." — Based on the Supreme Court Decision in G.R. 140975 entitled "Chua vs. National Housing Authority"

AFTER LONG THREE CASE IN THE SUPREME COURT, COURT OF APPEALS AND OTHER COURTS OF JUSTICE, THESE PEOPLE WHO WANT MONOPOLY OF THE PORTS WERE QUICK TO FORMS NOW THEIR COURTS AND ARE AGAIN HARING MICE.

WHERE SORRY REASONING? INDA A LOBBY'S RIGHT IS TO THROW IRRESPONSIBLE ACCUSATIONS, SEEK MEDIA PUBLICITY AND PURSUE CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION. THEY TAKE THE CONVENIENT WAY OF BLINDING THEIR COMPETITORS' REPUTATION IN ORDER TO COVER UP THEIR LOSS IN LEGAL BATTLES.

A CIVILIZED SOCIETY RESPECTS THE RULE OF LAW. MEN WHO IGNORE THE PROCESS OF LAW HAVE NO PLACE IN THE QUEST FOR PROGRESS, ORDER AND DECENCY.

ONCE AND FOR ALL LET US ALL UNITE TO TAKE OUR PEOPLE AGAINST MONOPOLY TO THE HIGHER GROUND NOW BOWING TO THE MAJESTY OF LAW AND HELP OUT IN THE NEW WAYS OF POSITIVE CHANGE FOR A PROGRESSIVE PHILIPPINES. MAGTULUNGAN TAYONG LABAN LABAN SA MONOPOLIYA, LUMABAN PARA SA PAGBABA NG PRESYO NG BILIHIN... LABAN/HAY ANG MGA MAHIRAP NA PERA.

According to our Constitution, it is the government's duty to ensure that the market is fair to all.
No monopolies, no cartels that kill competition.

– H.E. President Benigno Simeon Aquino III
State of the Nation Address
July 26, 2010

Cops nab Maguindanao massacre suspect

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COTABATO CITY (Inquirer.net) – A suspect in the Maguindanao massacre was arrested Saturday after he was wounded in a gun battle earlier with a rival clan.

Provincial police director Senior Supt. Marvelo Pintac identified the suspect as Esmin Ututan.

He said the clash took place around 4 p.m. in Datu Hoffer town in Maguindanao, followed by the Ampatuan clan that was allegedly behind the massacre of 57 people on Nov. 23 last year.

Pintac said that after the shootout, Ututan was taken by his relatives to a hospital in nearby Shariff Aguak town where police surround him.

"He used a different name at the hospital but he was positively identified by eye witnesses to bring to justice," Pintac said.

The military earlier said other massacre suspects were facing in Shariff Aguak.

Of the 197 suspects in the massacre, 80 have been arrested. The rest remain at large.

Former Maguindanao Gov. Andal Ampatuan Sr., his son Andal Ampatuan Jr. and 2 aides Ampatuan, former governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, are in jail awaiting trial for the massacre.

Among those killed were the wife of now Maguindanao Gov. Esmael Mangudadatu, his sister, other relatives, supporters and 32 journalists. They were on their way to file candidacy papers for Mangudadatu who was planning to run against the incumbent, Andal's younger brother, Maguindanao Vice Governor Datu Sajid Ampatuan.

'Journalists needed though jobs scarce'

By Alec Pal
Inquirer Visayas

DUMAGUETE CITY—"I won't lie to you...the jobs are getting scarce."

Still, multi-awarded photojournalist Luis Liwanag is blunt of the Los Angeles Times' chief bureau photographer to anyone expressing the calling, citing the need for a watchdog over the three branches of government.

Here, in a talk before students, photography enthusiasts and Dumaguete Journalists Saturday at Foundation University here, cited as an example a county in the United States where outside broke out in the local government after the newspaper was forced to close down a few months earlier due to financial constraints.

"This was because no one was watching them," he said.

He said journalism is an exciting career although no one gets rich in it.

"As a journalist, you'll see a lot of action, you'll get to see places and enjoy life. But you'll never become a Bill Gates."

Here, who was part of the Los Angeles Times team that won a Pulitzer Prize for their coverage of the Iraq civil war in 2007, showed his work involving multimedia production—a combination of photographs, sound and sometimes all rolled into a story.

He presented two stories. One was about a rebel journalist who traced his roots to black ancestors and the other about the continuing struggle of James Rhodes Miller, an American soldier who took part in the assault on Fallujah and whose picture by him appeared in newspapers worldwide as the famous "Marlboro Man."

Here, a native of Dumaguete, came close to mine when he recalled the fiasco of the Iraq war, when nobody the US assault on Fallujah in 2004, which he covered as an embedded journalist.

The assault, described by some as "worst Iraq like urban," still affects Here every now and then. He says unable to speak while looking at his own photos. "I think of Iraq every day. And it still gets to me..." he said, pausing to compose himself.

As a photojournalist, Here explores the practice of come to the profession of shooting their photos.

Many journalism students are learning more Photoshop than photographs. They learn how to adjust photos to make them more beautiful when they should actually concentrate on taking photographs and telling a story."

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From page A1

Inc., had pushed for a water concession deal for the planned Bagong Sayong Pilipinas International City in Paranaque City.

"I am, at this point, satisfied with his explanations," Mr. Aquino told reporters, referring to Singson.

Singson last night told the Inquirer that Mayuhlad did not enter into a midnight deal with Pagcor since the two firms commit to sign a memorandum of agreement (MOA) only last year, he said Mayuhlad inclosed the MWSS about the deal in February 2009.

He added that the reservoir Mayuhlad was building in Pagcor City was a result of the MOA between Mayuhlad and the MWSS, he said.

While he defended Singson, Mr. Aquino pointed out that the plan to put up Pagcor City on a reclamation area was not yet a done deal.

"I want [him] to understand that there is no particular contract [yet]," he said. "[Pagcor officials] are reviewing the whole concept of Pagcor City so as far as I'm concerned, this is a conceptual deal."

Deputy Executive Secretary Jose Rene Almendras said Pagcor officials Khami Gonzales had wanted to ensure that the city would have "adequate water (and) electricity" to attract investors.

But Aquino said Pagcor City (Entertainment City) was to be built within Mayuhlad's concession area, the west zone of Metro Manila. The east zone is handled by Maynilad Water.

New franchise area

But two MWSS board members, who asked not to be named, earlier said Pagcor City was headed to a newly established area and should be classified as a new and exclusive franchise area of the MWSS.

They said the MWSS should bid out the new franchise area to get the best deal for the government.

Singson explained why the Pagcor-Mayuhlad agreement was not a midnight deal.

"It ain't small until we have to do it in a group of his former high school classmates at De La Salle, Singson said on the payment was made by Mayuhlad to anyone, including Gonzales.

Singson confirmed last night that he met the e-mail to the group.

He said that in 2008, Gonzales asked Mayuhlad to put up a water treatment in Pagcor City to assure investors that the place would have reliable water supply even as early as the construction period.

Letter to Alfredo

Mayuhlad wrote MWSS Administrator Rodolfo Alfaro on Feb. 9, 2009, informing the MWSS of the arrangement that Mayuhlad wished to enter into with Pagcor, Mayuhlad.

Singson said that the MOA stipulated among other things that Pagcor would grant "nonexclusive rights to Mayuhlad for a period of land owned by Pagcor for free to Mayuhlad's investment ... would spend for all the cost of construction and connection to their designated onshore connection."

He said Mayuhlad would be investing close to P800 million for the reservoir, pumping station, generator sets, etc.

"The reservoir will give Pagcor City priority use of the water, but Mayuhlad still also use the reservoir to serve Parañaque and our expansion areas in Las Piñas and Cavite," he said.

He said that after the construction agreement, all these facilities and investments of Mayuhlad would revert to the MWSS.

In response to Mayuhlad's proposal, the MWSS sent a letter to De Jato dated May 14, 2009, signed by Alfaro informing Mayuhlad that the MOA had been reviewed by the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel and requesting it to transmit the revised deal to the MWSS for board approval, Singson said.

Additional fees

"However, recently sometime April 2010, before signing the MOA, Alfaro wanted Mayuhlad to pay the MWSS roughly additional fees claiming that Pagcor City is outside our concession area," he said.

Singson said Mayuhlad contested the new demand saying that it had no legal basis and that Pagcor City was within Mayuhlad's concession area since the west zone includes Pasay City and Parañaque City, he said.

He noted that Mayuhlad was already serving 300 Mall of Asia and all the adjoining areas of Pagcor City, including the entertainment development of the Tanjay group.

"Any additional payment of royalty fees the MWSS wants to charge will only increase the water rates in Mayuhlad consumers. Mayuhlad refused to pay any additional fees to the MWSS and even considered to compel the MWSS to dispute submission," Singson wrote his former high-school classmates.

Mayuhlad business plan

"Clearly, it is not a midnight deal. For instance, the construction of the reservoir started late last year and should be completed by September this year," he said.

Moreover, he said, the reservoir project had been included in Mayuhlad's business plan for 2006-2012 which the company submitted to the MWSS in 2006 for its rate rebasing process.

Singson said the government was "not losing any amount from the transaction as claimed because it does not have any legal basis to claim royalty fees."

"In fact, any payment made to the MWSS as additional royalty fees will only increase the water rates to consumers and will only be used by the MWSS for additional bonuses and allowances and operating expenses," he added.

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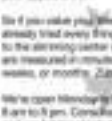
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Low-level peace talks an old ploy, say Reds

UTRECHT, Netherlands, Journal in Utrecht, the Netherlands, reported that NDFP had a strict policy against localized peace talks.

"Only the NDFP negotiating panel is authorized... to negotiate with the GRP. All units of the revolutionary forces follow the NDFP policy," he said.

The NDFP is the political arm of the communist rebels that has been holding on-and-off peace negotiations with the government.

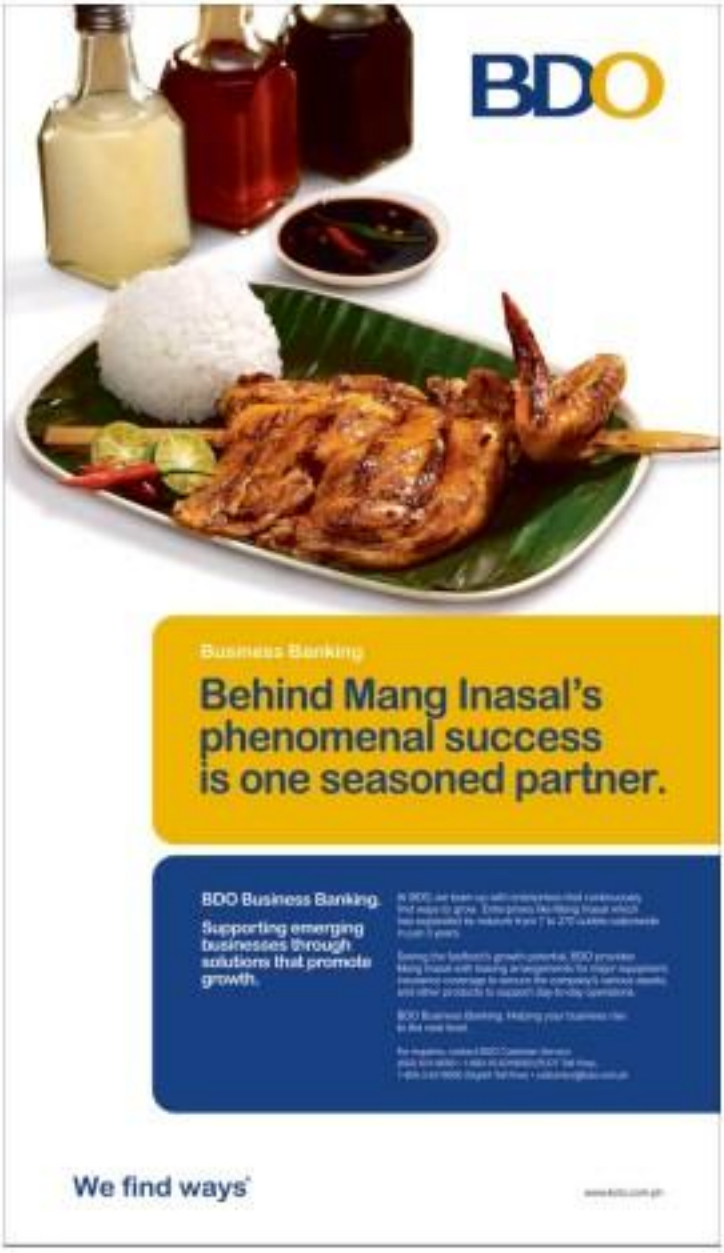
On Thursday, Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin said the government would extend its peace offer to holding peace negotiations not only with top-level NDFP officials abroad but also with NPA field commanders in the country.

Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) chair Jose Maria Sison, who is also based in Utrecht, also assailed the reheated peace overture of the government.

—Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—Exiled leaders of the local communist movement have dismissed the government's "reasonable" overture of holding localized peace talks with Jose Ducielo Ausay and others.

"Localized peace talks is a worn-out and unattractive item relished by the US-backed GRP (Government of the Republic of the Philippines) to give the illusion of peace talks. It is also a ruse designed to split the revolutionary movement," Luis Jalandoni, chair of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) negotiating panel, said in an e-mail to the Inquirer.



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Noy steps into PAL row

From page A1

proposes charges."

PAL, Ann's last option, has rejected the resignation of 25 of its pilots.

In a statement on Sunday the company said it had ordered its pilots to report back for work this week or risk losing seniority and administrative charges for causing the cancellations of several flights over the weekend.

"PAL doesn't want to get to the very of its pilots' dream of finishing better-paying jobs abroad, but they have contractual obligations with the company and a moral responsibility to thousands of passengers," the company said.

Captains

In the last two days, the airline has been forced to cancel regional and domestic flights at 11 captains and 12 first officers flying in Airbus A319s and A320s assigned from the Day 2 service.

"They left without giving PAL ample time to train replacements," the company said.

On Saturday, the shortage of pilots rather disrupted or canceled 21 PAL flights, including one to Hong Kong.

The Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) said eight PAL flights from Manila to four destinations and two returns—Caticlan, Cebu, Bacolod and Iloilo—were canceled yesterday.

The MIAA quoted PAL as saying that the cancellations were "planned."

Two international flights to Hong Kong and Singapore scheduled last night were also affected, delaying their departures by as much as 30 minutes.

About 5,000 passengers were affected, but most have been accommodated in succeeding flights, the airline said.

The Tag carrier said the pilots' resignation was something it could not prevent.

"Many of them simply did not show up for work and just handed in their resignation letters—some of them even sent PAL millions of pesos for the cost of their training," it said.

Losses, market share

PAL, founded in 1941, has a fleet of 38 aircraft. It flies to 44 domestic and international destinations. It has incurred losses of around five years because of rising fuel costs and low passenger loads, according to PAL spokesperson Jonathan Gesmundo.

With the entry of new airlines like Cebu Pacific, PAL's market share of domestic air travel has shrunk to 41 percent 1of the 14,747 million passengers in 20091. PAL used to control almost 200 percent of the domestic market before the entry of Cebu Pacific in 1996.

PAL's financial woes have lured by foreign carriers with higher salaries.

Four pilots, who requested anonymity because he still works for PAL, said salaries abroad were 120 percent higher, the current pay at PAL gi-bals.

But Elmer Dela, president of the Airline Pilots Association of the Philippines (Alpap), said money was not the only reason for the successive resignations.

Lower pay, as irrant

Dela said that a few months ago, PAL forced several of its pilots to take jobs at a sister company, budget carrier Air Philippines.

"They were forced to take lower salaries and the seniority of their tenure was removed," he said.

"It's like PAL is telling its employees that they owe their jobs to the company," Dela said.

He said the pilots did not want to leave their families to work abroad, but the airline's policies forced them out. "They are fed up," he added.

Many pilots have been trying to resign for weeks, but the management met their requests with hostility, according to the Alpap president.

Alpap said to be a labor union representing PAL pilots. The group was forced to leave PAL in 1998, after a pilot strike it accounted that year was declared illegal by the courts. It now calls itself representative from all local airlines.

Today, PAL pilots are the company's only employees without any union representation.

Impact on passengers

A business leader in Cebu is calling on the PAL management to immediately resolve the problem.

Antonio Chua, former president of the Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said businessmen would be adversely affected if the problem persisted. "The problem is very disturbing to business," he said.

Domingo de Guzman of the PAL information department in Mactan Cebu International Airport on Sunday morning of PR 848, which was supposed to leave for Manila at 9:35 a.m. The incoming flight from Manila at 8:45 a.m. as...PR 847, was also canceled.

On Saturday, incoming and outgoing flights—PR 843 and PR 844—at 9:35 a.m. and 6:20 a.m. respectively were canceled.

PAL has nine Cebu-Manila flights and nine Manila-Cebu flights on Sundays and seven Cebu-Manila and eight Manila-Cebu flights from Mondays to Saturdays.

De Guzman said the passengers were accommodated on other Manila-bound PAL flights on Saturday.

He, however, said that most of the passengers were able to leave in later flights, the passengers were already late for their respective appointments.

"But a bad for us businessmen because the time element is very important, especially if we have business meetings," he said.

Dialogue

Go said he felt sorry for the PAL management for failing its pilots to forge collective bargaining agreements, but he added that the airline should still have to act swiftly to resolve the problem, possibly by having a dialogue with the pilots and hearing what they want.

Wilfredo Prado, a passenger from Cagayan de Oro City, said he missed the first hours of his workshop in Manila on Saturday because of a canceled flight.

"I was moved to the next flight out to Manila. Good thing I'm a premium elite member. At least I was provided. Nevertheless, it still caused me discomfort," Prado said.

He said he was supposed to take the 6:30 a.m. flight to Manila on Saturday instead, he took the 8:50 a.m. flight.

Other affected passengers were "distressed to the next succeeding flights," he said.

The issue with its pilots puts PAL at odds with every part of its workforce.

Earlier this year, the PAL Employees' Association, which represents the company's ground crew, asked the labor department to stop the airline's plan to outsource 2,000 jobs.

PAL also has a pending appeal with the Supreme Court regarding a decision of its gain on the dismissal of 1,400 flight attendants, which the high tribunal earlier declared illegal.

Plateau case

The problem at the country's flag carrier came just as the government won the arbitration case against Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco) in the International Criminal Court in Singapore.

"It's with a very intense delight that I was informed this other day that we had won by the dismissal of the complaint in that arbitration [case] in Singapore," Mr. Aquino said.

With the decision, he said he was looking forward to having the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) Terminal 3 operating on "maximum capacity" by Christmas 2011.

The Terminal 3 project AC had sought international arbitration in connection with the Philippine government's takeover of the Naia 3, after the Supreme Court nullified the latter's contract with Piatco in a 2006 decision.

The following year, the high court ordered the government to provide compensation to Piatco because of the takeover.

With reports from Abbe Brooks in Manila; Jhunior Zapanlanan, Inquirer Mindanao, Rico Alcancilla, Inquirer Mindanao, and AP

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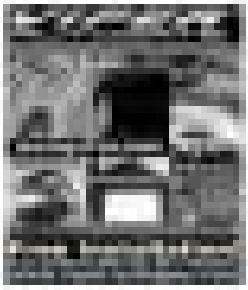

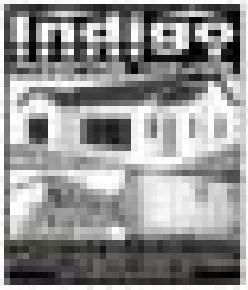

DOJ, Navy attack human trafficking

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OPINION

Textmail feedback: inquirer.opinion@gmail.com

Nothing but the truth

EDITORIAL

THE MONTH-OLD Aquino administration timed its first executive order the other day—and promptly ran into legal (or legalistic) resistance. To be sure, the resistance was not unexpected. Executive Order No. 1, creating the "Philippine Truth Commission of 2010," had already been extensively pre-criticized, so to speak.

The criticism from lawyer-politicians and militant activist has only grown since the EO was issued last Friday. While we support the basic idea, we wish to add our own reservations.

But first, a word about some of the foremost critics, which we believe has a bearing on their criticism. House Minority Leader Edcel Lagman, for instance. In 2003, Lagman offered a set of "prejudicial questions" which served, effectively as a parliamentary maneuver disguised as a legal (or legalistic) device to delay and then kill the first impeachment complaint against Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. This cynical misuse of the resources of the law and the rules of Congress does not necessarily invalidate Lagman's objections to the EO, but we should take his new-found concern with great caution. In Arroyo's heyday, he had stood to the way of greater transparency and accountability. His current position himself now as the voice of reason in this issue.

Brilliant Left leaders have also criticized the EO, but from the opposite end, for limiting itself to a narrower-than-hoped-for scope. Just before EO 1 was issued, for example, Bernard Reyes, the secretary general of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, said: "The executive order should clarify the scope [of investigations]... It shouldn't avoid extrajudicial killings and human rights abuses because these are interrelated." As it turns out, the EO limits itself to "investigate reports of graft and corruption of such scale and magnitude that shocks and offends the moral and ethical sensibilities of the people." We agree that the politically motivated killings and disappearances which marked the Arroyo legacy should be thoroughly investigated; on the other hand, we cannot recall any statement by President Aquino, during the campaign or after his proclamation, which expanded the scope of the EO to include the killings.

From the start, the very idea of a Truth Commission was supposed to discover the truth about the numerous allegations of corruption perpetrated by or under the Arroyo administration—allegations which could run for investigated properly because the same administration widened the resources of the law and the rules of Congress, plus a strategic executive directive or two, to frustrate the investigations. It is unfair to expect from a policy something that the policy-maker did not even promise.

The real root of the problem probably lies in the militant Left's visceral opposition to the new chair of the Commission on Human Rights, Etta Rosales, who should lead the investigations into these human rights abuses; if the CHR chair were somebody they found more sympathetic, it is possible that they would not insist so rigorously on their versions of the Truth Commission.

Our own reservations about the Truth Commission can be summed up in two key phrases: a lack of dispatch and a (perceived) lack of power.

The Commission is obviously very much a work-in-progress; but must the pace of progress be so slow? The EO took at least a month to craft; its release was accompanied by the announcement that Malacañang still needed to begin the search for the four other commissioners. Justice Secretary Leila de Lima clarified that the first hearings may take place next year yet. Commission chair Hilario Davide Jr. must act with more dispatch, and a greater sense of urgency. The wounds that need what the EO itself calls "closure" cannot be allowed to fester for too long.

The EO grants the Commission the power to subpoena any witness. In case the witness refuses, he will be "subject to administrative disciplinary action," if he or she is a government official or employee. If he [or she] is a private person, any such refusal "may be dealt with in accordance with law." We worry that these rather ambiguous provisions will not be enough to compel necessary testimony, and that, given the phrasing, they will only invite court action. That even Arroyo has said she will accept any invitation to face the Commission should not lull the Aquino administration into thinking that she, or her associates, will not in fact drag their feet, when the time to tell the truth comes.

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The Vizconde massacre revisited

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

ONE DAY last week, I happened to pick up an old copy, dated June 2008, of the Reader's Digest. The book's condensation was a true account by Stuart Taylor Jr. and KC Johnson, titled "Perverted Justice," of three young men, white lacrosse players of Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, who were accused of gang raping a stripper.

At about 9 p.m. on March 13, 2006, police barged into their rented house and arrested three of them.

Thus began a harrowing experience not only for the three, but for the whole team, the school, the student body and the whole community. The highly ranked lacrosse team had just finished a grueling practice and, following tradition, decided to have a party. Some-body had the idea of hiring exotic dancers to entertain them. They called an escort service who told them that two girls would dance for two hours for $400 each.

Two black women arrived but, instead to be drunk-or-no-drugs, started writhing on the floor simulating the sex act which the athletes found disgusting. Somebody entered a racist remark, there were harsh words, the two strippers stormed into the bathroom and left soon after. The police barged in at about 9 p.m. One of the black girls claimed she was gang-raped.

The police, instead of first interviewing the complainant of the flood or some prosecutor, he launched a media barrage against the lacrosse team, declared that the medical evidence had showed that the girl had been raped by the Duke athletes, that the players were "a bunch of jock, privileged, white, male hooligans. The local press picked it up, the school's faculty and later the student body, denounced them, the school itself canceled their season's games and fired their coach. The team members were DNA tested and the results were negative. But the DA pressed on with the case.

There was a shocking "rush to judgment."

An investigation showed, however, that the DA lied and stripped him of his law license. Duke University itself announced an out-of-court settlement with the coach and the three lacrosse players.

The story led me to thinking about what could be a similar case in the Philippines: the Vizconde massacre.

A family was massacred in a middle-class village in Paranaque. The girl of the family was allegedly gang raped. It was a sensational story and the media had a field day. An anti-crime group was formed which launched a media barrage and the public lapped it up.

Three sets of suspects were picked up by the National Bureau of Investigation but were released for lack of evidence. Finally, a fourth set, that of Hubert Webb, son of former Gen. Freddie Webb, and six others, was arrested and accused of rape-murder. They were tried and convicted and, if we still had capital punishment, probably would have been executed by now. They have been in prison for 13 years now.

The defense of the accused was alibi: they were somewhere else at the time of the crime. But there was no positive identification by the prosecution's star witness, Jessica Alfaro. In a criminal case, alibi is a very weak defense when the prosecution establishes positive identification by a witness.

In desperation, Hubert Webb submitted for 2004 scrutiny, DNA testing is now a useful and foolproof tool in criminal cases, especially rape. If the semen samples from Hubert and that taken from the raped girl matched, then there is no doubt that he was the rapist. But if they did not match, that is proof that he did not rape her. The prosecution and the judge denied them basis happy for the 2004 testing.

Strangely, however, the prosecution opposed the DNA testing and the judge denied the defense motion. The Webb family appealed all the way to the Supreme Court. Last April 26, the Supreme Court finally granted the plea for DNA testing.

On April 23, 1997, Dr. Raquel Fortun, chief of the NBI Medico-Legal Division, had declared that the semen specimens gathered from the victims or rape victim Carmela Vizconde "is still existing and in the custody of the Bureau." But after the high court's order last March issuing, the NBI reported that the semen specimens' expiration date "is no longer in the custody of the NBI." What happened?

Even assuming that what the NBI claims is true, then Judge Amelita Tolentino, Testimonies should be made to explain what she did with the semen specimens which the NBI said were turned over to her court in 1995.

The Webb family said in a statement: "For the NBI to say now that the semen specimens on trial are no longer in their custody [sic] just with them are more than a deliberate scheme on the part of the NBI to prove Hubert Webb and his co-accused guilty at all costs, just so they will not be criticized for failing for the fourth time, to identify the true culprits of the Vizconde killings."

There are other interesting circumstances. The NBI's Arroyan-bungling testified during the trial that Jessica Alfaro, after repeatedly failing to produce an eyewitness to the massacre but she pretended, volunteered to act out the role of an eyewitness. But in an earlier affidavit, she had said she was outside the house "as a lookout" while the crime was being committed inside. In a second affidavit she claimed she entered the Vizconde house and witnessed everything—before she peeped through the bedroom door.

Webb's defense included official statements and records from the US government that Hubert was in the US at the time of the crime, plus 93 other witnesses who saw him there at that time. All accounts were disregarded by the judge.

Don't get me wrong. I am not saying that Hubert is innocent, but don't all these things show that there could be reasonable doubt about his guilt? And that the case should at least be reopened to make sure that there is no miscarriage of justice?

The truth of the matter

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

EDCEL LAGMAN complains. In a "counter-brief" he delivered in Congress, he slammed P-Noy's Sona thus: "framed to being a blueprint for development and policy direction." Pointing the headlights who helped her send the vote to win a partisan press release." Complaining about the people who complained about her, who were mostly PR spinners, it set a complaint about? Talking of making this country an Enchanted Kingdom by 2020—the reason to last that long—to not a unified food statement? Well, maybe "I ... am ... sorry" is not a campaign slogan.

As to the judge's executive orders, didn't they agree wholehearted lady in GMA's cabinet that and one public official might testify against her without her permission, no one might tell the truth means.

Lagman pooh-poohed a shady deal on grounds of executive privilege, and "Hello Garci" was a mere "lapse in judgment"?

Edcel. Lagman answer. Joker Lagman's challenge of the Truth Commission this way: "It's not a question of whether the third Sona... ere can create a commission." I think that's a given. I think it's a concern of whether some powers can be done through executive or legislative fiat." He misses the point.

At first, a Truth Commission is not just a legal option. It is a political imperative. A Truth Commission is not just an ordinary commission to ferret out the truth about the wrongful commission. GMA's pals got from her. It is an extraordinary commission to ferret out the truth about the wrong that was GMA herself. It is not just another anti-corruption body to recover the loot that was stolen from us. It is a historic body to recover the life that was stolen from us—and give justice to those whose lives were literally stolen from them.

A Truth Commission is there to make sure no other GMA, or Marcos, will come again.

It's just another anti-corruption body, then one enough is merely duplicates the work of the BOC and Ombudsman. If it's just another commission, then one enough it fails under the legal questions surrounding the creation of commissions. The Truth Commission is not. A Truth Commission does not. That is what allowed Lord Lord Albanese to create his Truth Commission, to set out the truth about the forced disappearances. That is what allowed Nelson Mandela to create his Truth Commission, to set out the truth about apartheid in South Africa. That is what has allowed other leaders to create their Truth Commissions, to make their people, and the world, see the depth of evil wrought by the old order, and seeing that to be irrevocably destroyed by the new.

The Philippines, quite incidentally, has created Wikipedia among the 16 countries that have formed Truth Commissions. The entry simply states: "In 2010, President-elect Benigno Aquino III announced that a truth commission will be formed to investigate unresolved crimes in the Philippines."

I've always thought our own Truth Commission—I was the first to call for it, and have insisted on it all those years, arguing that we would need that kind of cleansing after GMA departs, peacefully or violently, by election or by revolution—would quite simply and literally set out the truth about GMA's rule. The truth was the greatest swindle all those years. The truth was the first victim of those years. The truth was the first victim of those years. GMA's rule was a rule of lies. It buried the truth along with the dead bodies of activists and journalists and the victims of the Maguindanao massacre. It buried the truth along with Jun Lozada who nearly sealed up a dead body after being kidnapped and fully ended up a fugitive to La Salle Greenhills. It buried the truth along with the people's ardor for 2004 elections.

We need to exhume the truth like we need to exhume the bodies of the dead.

The way to go forward is to go backward. That of course will not be unfathomable, or recognizable, to someone used to applauding GMA, who imagine it is going forward to say, like GMA's bishops, "Let's move on," after someone has stolen the vote, after someone would need that kind of cleansing after GMA departs, peacefully or violently, by election or by revolution—would quite simply and literally set out the truth about GMA's rule. The truth was the greatest swindle all those years. The truth was the first victim of those years. GMA's rule was a rule of lies. It buried the truth along with the dead bodies of activists and journalists and the victims of the Maguindanao massacre. It buried the truth along with Jun Lozada who nearly sealed up a dead body after being kidnapped and fully ended up a fugitive to La Salle Greenhills. It buried the truth along with the people's ardor for 2004 elections.

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That is the truth of the matter.

Reactions to my land reform piece

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

Maj. Gen. Art Ortiz, a soldier of valor

REVEILLE

Marlon J. Ramos

Big Sister

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Carlos Joaquin T. Lanuza

Asia's leadership gap

WORLD VIEW

Yenmi Tay

LETTERS

Merceditas Gutierrez not the legitimate Ombudsman

RAS TNE scope of office of current Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez expired under the Constitution? Yes, for the following reasons:

1. The Constitution is clear. It essentially provides: "The Ombudsman and his Deputies shall serve for a term of seven years without reappointment. ..." (Sec. 11, Article XI) "All vacancies shall be filled within three months of the day on vacancy occurs" (Sec. 2, Article XI)

2. According to jurisprudence, where the law is clear, there is no room for interpretation. We must apply the law as we see it. Simple English as we find it, and without any regard to consequences. (Simon v. Lopez, 1 Phil 7203 according to the same court, valid means "no legal existence."

3. In the case of Ombudsman Antonio A. Desierto, his term of seven years began when he took his oath of office on Sept. 18, 2002, when his successor, Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo, was appointed by Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

4. Ombudsman Marcelo's seven-year term that began on Oct. 19, 2002 and expired at midnight of Oct. 9, 2009. However, his tenure in office ended on Dec. 5, 2005 when he resigned, thereby leaving his term of office a balance of three years and 10 months. He was caseworkership Gutierrez.

5. Gutierrez's appointment was, therefore, a mere reinstatement of Marcelo's seven-year term. Hence, her term expired at midnight of Oct. 8, 2009. While his tenure had three months within which to fill up the vacancy, she did not comply with the constitutional mandate. That is to be positive.

6. Can it be properly said that Gutierrez enjoys a continuing appointment beyond the three month period? The answer is "No." Here the expression of the constitutional term, the only way the incumbent can continue to exercise is to serve it as he is appointed to the office. However, this cannot happen. The Constitution unequivocally provides: "The Ombudsman and his Deputies shall serve for a term of seven years without reappointment. ..."

7. Under the law, a substantial distinction is made between "term" and "tenure." "The first is fixed by law; the second is not. Tenure refers to the actual time an officer holds office. It may be less than the term or up to the expiration of the term. In other words, mere expiration, inter or not, on the will of the officer. Thus, while term is mandated to the officer, tenure is mandated to the officer.

8. The Constitution fixes the term of office of the Ombudsman at seven years and prohibits reappointment. Therefore, when Gutierrez succeeded Marcelo, her tenure was limited by Marcelo's constitutional term.

9. Consequently, after midnight of Oct. 9, 2009, Ombudsman Gutierrez completely lost jurisdiction to perform the duties of the office. From that point she no longer is valid in since she no longer have been performed without jurisdiction.

10. Days in and in. The law time is basic (measure), but that is the law.

—ALAN F. PAULL
alanpaulaw@yahoo.com

Challenges for Romulo

It's [illegible] to the editor, the Department of Foreign Affairs argued that issues raised by the paid ad on the ePassport [illegible], 6/27/10] had been addressed by the courts and government agencies. The DFA memorandum completely did not clear those issues addressed during the deactivated Arroyo regime.

In response, we refer to President Aquino's statement in his State of the Nation Address (Sona): "Sa ang bagong inhinyo mga Pilipino. Pwede ang [illegible] — Kabilang [illegible] ang [illegible] Bilib tayo sa kanilang galing."

What can Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo say about this policy statement of P-Noy after the Department's illegible contract on issuing and valid BOT agreement and illegally used taxpayer funds to implement the ePassport project?

What is the fact?

1. The Senate ePassport imposes $80 on OFWs and was implemented with a P1.4-billion appropriation from Congress.

Under the Senate-approved Machine-Readable Passport and Visa (MRPV) BOT project, the cost is P1,000 per passport and the government retains the $80 fee. For 2010, gov. P1.4 billion P600 goes to the BOT proponents. This is what is meant by P-Noy when he stated: "Sa mahal pong ating [illegible] ay kabilang sa mga [illegible] hindi na tayo pipayag. Hindi na po tayo."

2. The Senate ePassport is released to the applicant 10 working days after payment of fees.

Under the Senate-approved MRPV project, the rapidly issuance of passports is within 72 hours after payment of fees. Additional passports are released within eight hours after payment of fees.

3. The Senate ePassport constituted a building at a cost of nearly P1 billion. Filipino taxpayers will be paying for this facility long after Secretary Romulo leaves the DFA.

Under the original Senate-approved MRPV project, the facility does not entail expenditures of public money.

4. DFA entered into a system of agreements with Underground Industries (UI) for passport laminates at $.07 euros per laminate. However, in a bidding in Mexico on Aug. 3, 2007, UI offered the same passport laminates at only $0.34 or approximately $.24 euros per laminate.

The challenge Romulo to make public the executive agreements.

5. The DFA, and not the Filipino people alone, is declared "that the cancelled MIA project proposes a new outmoded passport technology."

In truth and in fact, the 2D Bar Code technology is fully compliant with Document 9303, which is the compendium of standards on machine-readable passports and visas established by ICAO.

We challenge Romulo to unidentifiedly produce a certification from ICAO that the 2D Bar Code technology is an "outmoded passport technology."

We challenge Romulo to produce government members and checks used in the payment of our passport laminates, long required by COA since 2007.

If he can't produce both, he should resign.

—LEANDRO MAGKILAT,
Noel DOMINGO,
[illegible] MAKABALI

In fairness to the Abads

I KNOW Secretary Butch Abad. He used to work for me as a project officer when I was executive director of the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP). Typical of the same time that President Benigno Aquino, who had just returned from the United States then, was also employed at PBSP. As far as I remember, Secretary Abad was a good and effective staff member.

As the comments mentioned in the July 30 letter of the readers, that there are too many Abads in the government. I believe that is because in the family, it should be noted:

1. That Sec. Florencio Abad was elected by the people of Bataan and not appointed by the President;

2. Secretary Abad is the only new appointee of the President;

3. Julio Abad, as the readers even have pointed out, was the President's chief of staff when he was a senator; as he now also is ready a secretary;

4. I do not know Lua Abad, but Secretary Cesar Drilon, who appointed her, must have good reasons for wanting him at end of mail.

—SERVANDO S. LUA III,
1227 Makati St.,
Islands Village, Makati City

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Co-ops: Stop Napocor privatization

By Alec Pal
Inquirer Visayas

DUMAGUETE CITY—Electric cooperatives in the Visayas are asking the government to stop the privatization of the National Power Corp. (Napocor) to avert a spike in the bills of its consumers.

Officials of the Negros Oriental 2 Electric Cooperative (Noreco 2) said they expected an increase in the buying price of power after their contract with Napocor expires this December.

They told reporters on Friday that the government's rumor to privatize the Napocor was not working.

Chito Lozano, Noreco 2 engineering department manager, said the cooperative was negotiating with Greenergy, which is offering a higher rate than Napocor.

"I am not at liberty to divulge (Greenergy's) offer because of a confidentiality agreement, but all I can say is that the price will go higher," he said.

Napocor, which sells power to Noreco 2 and several other electric cooperatives in the Visayas, was being privatized to attract new foreign players in the country's power sector.

The Napocor facility in Valencia town in Negros Oriental has been bought by the Energy Development Corporation, while the Philippine National Oil Corp. facilities, which provide steam for Greenergy's power turbines, have been bought by Energy Development Corp., another Lopez-owned company.

So far, there has been only one hiccup in the power sector, the South Korea-owned Kepco Philippine Corp., since the government resumed its privatization plan.

Another investor which is opening coal-fired plants in Cebu and Panay is First Metro Investment of the Metrobank group.

"From the start, it started on the wrong foot. For us, it's a failure," Lozano said.

He said Noreco had joined other electric cooperatives in recommending that the privatization of the geothermal plant in Leyte be suspended.

"The goal of inviting new investors into the power sector is a failure as only a handful of power plants are being constructed and nobody can supply the needed 500 megawatts of power," Lozano said.

Lozano and Noreco 2 and other cooperatives were working through the Span Organization of Philippine Electric Cooperatives) party-list congressman to have this move stopped.

Noreco 2 is mandated by its contract to buy electricity only from Napocor.

While the privatization of the Napocor facility in Negros Oriental, Noreco 2 now gets its power from the Napocor plant in Leyte and sometimes, in Luzon.

This also results in the lowering of the voltage from 220 volts to below 200, which has been blamed by many customers for damage to their electrical appliances.

Noreco has secured a contract with Napocor for a 32-megawatt base load even as its base demand is 30.2 MW.

"We are short by 23.2 MW for base load demand," Lozano said. A base load is the power needed during non-peak hours.

Noreco 2 officials called on the public Friday to change their lifestyles in save on power and prevent brownouts.

Lozano said the power outlook for Negros Oriental was very dismal and unless the consumers started saving energy, they would be forced to live with rotating brownouts until the electric cooperative could work out a new deal with power providers by December.

Noreco 2 said it was forced to implement rotating brownouts in Dumaguete on July 15 and July 20 lest the entire Visayas grid would shut down.

Neda has grim forecast for Cordillera

BAGUIO CITY—The still to be completed repair of roads and bridges damaged by last year's typhoons and the impact on farming of drought in the first half of the year and the La Niña phenomenon in the remaining months provide a grim forecast for Cordillera economy.

Jane Ngadelo, Cordillera director of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda), said the region might have another year of negative growth in 2010 due to factors beyond anybody's control.

Neda projected a negative growth rate for 2009 due to disasters brought about by Tropical Storm "Ondoy" and Typhoon "Pepeng" in September and October last year.

The report on gross regional domestic product (GRDP) for 2009 has not yet been released. But GRDP measures the pace of growth based on the services and goods produced by each region.

In July last year, Neda announced a slide in the 2009 growth rate from the robust 7.1 percent posted in 2007 to 1.4 percent.

"If development is a race, we are competing against so many regions ... and given the rules of the game, we can't expect to win," Ngadelo said in his State of the Region Address (Sora) on Friday.

He said the development of a Cordillera road improvement program (Crip) to build an economic backbone for the upland region was started only in 1997, and it had been a struggle to keep the program funded each year.

THIS PORTION of Halsema Highway in Benguet has to repair's pending. Heavy rains caused by storms last year caused its mountain wall to collapse, burying the road which connects Benguet to Mt. Province.

Concern

Ngadelo said he was concerned about reports that some of the repairs to keep major Cordillera roads open during the rainy months had been suspended after Public Works Secretary Rogelio Singson started impeachment proceedings and canceled alleged midnight contracts need.

Cordillera's vegetable hothouse Ngadelo said, relies on the Halsema Highway, whose sections were damaged by typhoons last year, to sustain trade with Metro Manila and other markets.

Supplies were disrupted by the drought and might also be hampered by heavy rains expected this year, officials of the Department of Agriculture said.

Ngadelo said the Cordillera also defines its advantage as a watershed area the because of its environment, and the economies of many provinces rely on forest products.

But the region lost 45 percent of its forest growth, at an average of 102 hectares of lost trees per year, he said.

A caveat of Cordillera GRDP sources 22 years revenue that its economy has been "erratic and unsustainable," owing in reliance on industries, based by Baguio City and Benguet, he said.

The report profits posted by Texas Instruments Philippines Inc. (Tipi) and the Baguio City Economic Zone had occasionally pulled up the region's GRDP figures.

But it was the impact of the American recession on Tipi in 2008 that pulled down the Cordillera GRDP, he said.

The last instance of how quickly the economy grow and reached to its poverty incidence because it shows that more poor households were recorded even in the years when the Cordillera economy improved, he said.

He said Neda recorded a poverty incidence of 41 percent in 1988 a year after the region was created. The poverty incidence grew to 51 percent by 1994, but it tapered off and slid gradually until 2003, when the poverty index was recorded at 23.3 percent.

Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

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GMA wants MRF, not sanitary landfill, in home district

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo prefers the use of materials recovery facilities (MRF) over a sanitary landfill in solving the garbage problem in her district, a position that differs with the initial solution seen by Gov. Lilia Pineda.

In a text-shared two-hour after she killed on the development plans she had outlined for the second congressional district's 10 towns during a meeting with some directors of government agencies in Central Luzon in Candaba town on Friday, three days ago, sources said.

The Indian president arrived in Candaba on Friday afternoon to end the visit of Indian Army Bhaya. The directors caught up with her to give her a gift—an antique sangkaan of the area and district.

Pineda went to the Palawan house after greeting a program that closed the town's observance of nutrition month.

Arroyo drafted the documents the MRF after she cited the economic potentials of Presidential Economic and the nearby barely-developed towns of Masinloc and Mounted, regional workers director Rosalio Victorio said when asked to confirm the written and environmental plans brought up in that meeting.

"We need to take care of the environment to let tourism flourish, that's what she meant," Victorio said.

Arroyo first told Pineda that quarry investors can be used as collateral to finance the development projects, two persons present in the meeting said. They asked not to be named because of authority to speak on behalf of the city in Pineda.

Pineda, in that meeting, inherited Arroyo that she had ordered a study on the feasibility of building a sanitary landfill on a 21-hectare land being bought by the son of Floridablanca Mayor Eduardo Guinness in the Aurea village of Mabalacat in that town.

The land is a close land property of the Philippine National Bank.

The planned dump is within an ecological disaster, the land title of which was given by Arroyo herself to Pineda.

Supporting the site on July 27, Pineda at first mentioned the prospect of moving an "open dump," a mobile that showed the sad environmental progression.

The area was supposed to be used this week to hold session dumped on sections of the 94-km PNR Magallie in Bacolor. It was done for incentives and assessment by the Japan International Cooperation Agency, which funded the construction of the dike.

But on the advice of the Environmental Management Bureau, Pineda ordered the garbage collected in Bacolor and Guagua headed to the Metro Clark sanitary landfill in Barangay Balangkas in Capas, Tarlac.

Arroyo, the Internet sources said, told Pineda that environmentalists will oppose any sanitary landfill, and that natives would be better managed through the MRF.

Pineda said the responsibility for construction of a sanitary landfill was at the "study level" and welcomed October of using the MRF.

Months before the May elections, Arroyo negotiated Pineda's change seniority in the second district, former of Quingua, Sto. Rosario, Bulacan, Sto. Tomas, Porac and Floridablanca.

She also gave out funds to put up the MRF and equipment for producing organic fertilizer.

The human-assisted presidential candidate Arroyo has won several speeches she delivered during her more than 31 visits to her home province from February 2009 to May 2010. Tourism Secretary Jesus Inquisitor Garibay Lakas-

ABTEL people are alarmed that their village could be the next dump for waste known as Pampanga.

Son of slain former radioman gets death threats

BAGUIO CITY—A town of slain Kalinga radio broadcaster Jose Dagdag has received death threats after charges were filed against five suspects in his father's murder, close relatives said.

Joseph Dagdag has been placed under the custody of Senior Supt. Virgilio Lapo, Kalinga police director, due to threats arising from police reports that should not be a witness to the July 3 murder of the elder Dagdag.

The family identified the information through their lingkod.com, Baldipat Antholo, a government engineer.

Reached by phone, Chief Insp. Bob Ibe Glenn Gonapac, police chief of Tabuk City in Kalinga, said he was unaware of the threats to Dagdag's family about the threats on Saturday.

Joseph, 21, is on a list of applicants being considered by the Department of Justice for the Witness Protection Program, Gonapac said.

Joseph was the first person to help his 73-year-old father, who slumped bleeding in their kitchen in Barangay Tuga in Tabuk on the night of July 3. Dagdag was reading the family's paper when he was shot.

Subsequent police reports indicated that Joseph might have witnessed the killing. But the family clarified that Joseph was not in position to identify the gunmen.

Antholo said Joseph and his mother were inside the house when the shooting occurred.

"The family has been very scared for Joseph because identifying gets counts in the rumors run like making him a target by rumormers. Update from my cousin. He wants [the media] to know he never witnessed his father's murder," Antholo said by telephone on Saturday.

Police had followed back provided by other persons, leading them to suspects Rolando Edmund and Willy Bilog and Eulalia and Edgardo Gumwon, she said.

The suspects were allegedly involved in cattle rustling in Kalinga and nearby Isabela provinces, and the Dagdag family believed the former broadcaster was murdered for a police information, she said.

On July 28, police found Rolando Bilog dead in a farm near the boundary of Kalinga and Isabela. His body bore bullet wounds.

Edgardo Gumwon was murdered on July 8, while the three remaining suspects were being hunted by the police.

Monitoring by the Tabuk police and the information provided by the government in Baguio's conciliator government tension from rising between the victim's family and those of the suspects, authorities said.

"We find the [members of the] Freedom] Security Group chose up in Kalinga. We were visited by the Department of Justice. We were visited by the National Bureau of Investigation, which exhausted my uncle's body [on July 12], a day after he was buried to conduct an autopsy," she said.

"But we also want to put us on record that whoever did us such bad nothing to do with a land deal. We don't have an land feud to fight," she said.

Woman excellent

In Carmelites Inc. police said a woman pulled the trigger of a gun and seriously wounded a radio reporter as she died later at the hospital in Iligan City early Saturday.

Twenty-two days earlier, the victim, Willie Belen, DWEB-FM reporter, had survived multiple bullet wounds on July 9 in an attack in Bislig, Surigao del Sur.

Senior Supt. Jonathan Abbag, acting provincial police director, on Saturday said the female suspect was identified by Belen police photos and described by Belen as an affidavit he executed before he died.

Belen was on his way home from his radio station when two persons riding on a motorcycle stopped in front of him and shot him.

He was declared dead, pro-Mister smacked and killed under the administration of Provincial Aquino, who announced in his State of the Nation Address that the case had been solved.

Abbag said Belen identified the driver and the trigger-woman in the hospital after about five shortened recovery from the first operation, with the help of a government prosecutor who showed him the police photos.

But the police director could only identify the woman as Ita Lubid, an alleged member of the communist rebel group New People's Army.

In a media interview on Saturday in Lapanda City, Supt. Elcin Bron, regional police command spokesperson, named the suspects as Lian Bagnayan, Vincent Gobyao and Villamor Flores Jr., in quarter Northern Leyte; Jason Escobar Jr., Dagupan Northern Leyte.

ABTEL people are alarmed that their village could be the next dump for waste known as Pampanga.

NEWSBRIEFS

■ COMPOSTELA VALLEY

NPA rebels burn banana firm's trucks

COMMUNIST REBELS burned four trucks carrying banana plantation workers in Compostela Valley province, forcing to pay "revolutionary taxes," military and police officials said.

The New People's Army (NPA) attack was the second on Dole Stanfilco this year, according to Army 2nd Infantry Division (ID) spokesman Capt. Jo Maria Cabrera.

At least 50 members of the NPA's front 21 stormed the Kabuntalan-Mamguitan compound near Barangay Camansanguan in New Bataan town at around 8:30 a.m. and trapped three truck drivers and a security guard before they set the vehicles on fire, Cabrera said.

"The drivers were ordered to get off before the rebels doused the trucks with gasoline and set them on fire," Agatan said. The rebels, he said, had issued Camansanguan and Barangay Tandarayan.

In March, the NPA also torched seven vehicles of the banana firm.

Kristine Cute, Inquirer Mindanao

■ LAGUNA

Robber killed

A DARAC policeman killed an robbery attempt by four people and killed one of them in a shoot-out on Friday evening, police said Saturday.

Senior Insp. Jessie Rasote, Cavinte police station's station officer, said the robbers, aboard a Toyota Innova, JAC Liner Bus, the site is in Barangay Mabacan in Calauan, as the bus was traveling along the Maharlika Highway in Barangay San Francisco of San Pablo City.

Rasote said that as the robbers swiped valuables from the passengers, PO2 Marcio Mario Ramos of the Talian City police, who was riding the bus to station bother, engaged one of them, Jay-R Bautista, in a shoot-out.

The three others—Ralph Vargas, Emmanuel Magpantay and John Emily—overwhelm police men.

Rasote said Aang was brought to the hospital but was declared dead on arrival. Bautista, Marlon Lo, Inquirer Southern Luzon

■ LAGUNA

P4M in wires seized

A SUPPOSED anti-illegal gambling operation resulted in the recovery of four of copper wires allegedly stolen from the transmission towers and other communications in San Pedro town.

Senior Supt. Elmer Ramos, chief of the Calabarzon Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit, on Saturday said the police raiding team came to a search warrant against businessman Albert Jaime Ito, boarding illegal firearms in his warehouse of scrap materials in Barangay Narayan Thursday noon.

The police said that aside from charges over the illegal arms and explosives, Ito faces a charge of stealing copper following the recovery of the copper wires.

Marlon Cleve, Inquirer Southern Luzon

■ BATAAN

Fil-Am nabbed for theft, fraud

A FILIPINO-AMERICAN wanted by the Dumfries Virginia police in California for theft and fraud charges was arrested Wednesday after a 30-minute chase with police in Dinalupihan town.

Virgilio Tarael, 52, has pending cases of estafa and robbery with homicide in Manila and Quezon City courts, Senior Supt. Arnold Gunnacao, provincial police director, said. Tarael had long been wanted by the Manila Police District (MPD) for theft, estafa and robbery, he said.

Police said Tarael was a former Manila police councilman being overbearing robbery and estafa in Manila town to cause and being in the United States where he allegedly committed fraud and embezzlement.

His name and picture were posted in the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) website after he was arrested.

Greg Bituin Jr., Inquirer Central Luzon

95 COUNTRIES.
21-YEAR DROUGHT ENDED.
1 FILIPINA SILVER MEDALIST.
YES. WE FILIPINOS CAN.

Carmela Antoinette Lao
1st Filipina Silver Medalist
51st International Mathematical Olympiad
Astana, Kazakhstan
July 02-14, 2010

A true Witness to the Word in the World.
Pride of Saint Jude Catholic School.

Dagupan mayor orders probe of expired goods

By Yolanda Sotto
Inquirer Northern Luzon

DAGUPAN CITY—Mayor Benjamin Lim has ordered an investigation of expired instant noodles still kept in the warehouse of the city social welfare and development office (CSWDO) and used by the agency in its food assistance program.

Assessment from the city information office said packs of noodles that expired in May and June were being stored in the warehouse.

An inspection showed that some expired goods continued the expired noodles believed to have been served to children under the care of the social welfare office.

Expiry date

Jan Rhea Sandillan, the city social welfare officer, said she did not see anything wrong in consuming expired noodles because she believed these were safe to eat within six months after their expiration date.

"We can thus the goods' expiration date was June 2010. But I think these can be consumed safely up to six months after," Sandillan said. "Maybe we could remove the seasoning so the noodles will not go to waste," said Sandillan.

Reporters also found several unopened boxes of a chocolate energy drink inside the warehouse. The goods have a November expiry date.

Saving for rainy season

Asked what had kept the office from opening and distributing the goods, Sandillan said the CSWDO was saving them for the rainy season when food supply would be scarce. Nearly 800 residents displaced by floods and typhoons.

She said the expired instant noodles were part of donations for victims of Typhoon "Pepeng" in Pangasinan in October last year.

"We can make some supply so we can give food items to people evoking help from the agency," she said.

Rice-rich Nueva Ecija still getting imported rice

Rice cargo for typhoon victims shocks exec

By Yolanda Sarao
Inquirer Northern Luzon

SAN FERNANDO CITY—A shipment of rice sorted here this week earmarked for victims of Typhoons "Ondoy" and "Pepeng" that struck Luzon last year but, so, it did not comprise a part of the government's inventory are impressed that Ilocanos' hearts swelled.

"I was shocked because there was so much," Bayan Bilde Ortega said referring to the 9,500 sacks allotted for the city.

Leo Reyeses, regional director of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), said the rice shipment came from the United Nations' World Food Programme and represented the second round of its emergency food assistance to residents hit by typhoons last year.

The sacks of well-milled, long grain rice were stashed with 50-kilogram bags of rice donated by International Development Food for the Americas Project" and the date "June 2010."

Reyeses said the first shipment, with a volume of 1,440.48 metric tons (MT), arrived in March while the second shipment was to be shipped in the following months.

DSWD records showed that the second shipment, amounting to 43,620 sacks of rice, had been allotted to Pangasinan, La Union, Benet, Ilar and Ilocos Sur.

The allocation for San Fernando City represented its share from the first and second shipments, local officials said.

Marivel Celeza, the official in charge of DSWD's disaster management in the region, said the rice was intended for the government's food-for-work programs.

Para, she said, was given to residents who work on community projects like construction or repair of farm-to-market roads, school buildings, drainage systems and fences.

Celeza said every town could participate in the programs, but not all towns in the Four Provinces were included in the implementation. Only local governments that submitted work proposals after the typhoons struck were considered, she said.

In Pangasinan, only six towns and two city applied for the program, with Binmaley receiving 9,540 sacks for 48 projects.

Binmaley Mayor Marvelo Resurreccion said in his town, workers were paid 10 kilograms of rice for every eight hours of work they rendered daily. Three workers could earn 30 kg or a sack of rice each for working five days, some of them sold the amount that was more than their household needs and used the money to buy other essentials.

Ortega and other towns in La Union received fewer rice because the allocation was matched to the local government proposals.

Bacnotan town, for instance, got only 216 sacks while San Juan town received 312. The coastal town of Caba received a bigger allocation of 1,008 sacks.

Cabaa said the rice could not be stockpiled because the project required officials to dispose of the stocks by Aug. 30.

Both Ortega and Bacnotan said there was no problem in disposing of the rice because of the many property distributors early losing and debtors in their areas.

Reyeses said the Ilocos government had been using its rice allotment as payment for workers involved in the construction of 200 houses for typhoon victims.

Ortega said if workers did not want rice as payment, "there was still get other workers willing to accept rice as payment."

FARMERS in Tayabas, Quezon, prepare the rice fields for the planting season.

By Armand Galang
Inquirer Central Luzon

CABANATUAN CITY—While Nueva Ecija is one of the country's top palay producers, it also received a large volume of rice imported by the National Food Authority (NFA) from Thailand, Pakistan and Vietnam, an NFA official said Thursday.

Nueva Ecija harvests produces 20 million bags of rice yearly, but the NFA still allocated 60,000 bags of imported rice for the province covering March to July, said Eliseo Alejandro, the province's NFA manager. Each bag contains 50 kilograms of milled rice.

But Alejandro said the majority of rice sent to Nueva Ecija stock may be not purchased like Nueva Ecija.

Rice traders in the province transport 1.5 million bags of milled rice out of the yearly rice production's 20 million bags, Tagalog, leaving only 10 million bags for the province's needs.

"Rice consumption in Nueva Ecija is [ ] are always been just enough to maintain a sound market for the consumers," Alejandro said.

Inventory

He said the supply should last until farmers begin planting rice again in the end of October for the next cropping season.

NFA records show that Nueva Ecija residents consume 15,000 bags daily.

The agency's inventory this month showed that traders have 670,000 bags available in the market, while households have 1,374,000 bags.

Reinando Bolaños, a rice dealer from Quezon town, said most consumers consider the imported rice cheaper and better than quality when buying rice.

"They would rather go for P22 a kg, which is the price of regular milled rice here, NFA," he said.

Alejandro says between 50 and 200 sacks of rice for 600 workers.

In Bagong Silang affordable of the Department of Social Welfare and Development said some of 8,000 rice stocks are being used to pay residents who are rehabilitating infrastructure damaged by last year's typhoons.

Records of the DSWD Cordillera show that 770 metric tons (MT) of NFA rice were bought for the 8-week round of projects funded by the United Nations World Food Program (UNWFP) in Cordillera's provinces left hard by Typhoon "Pepeng" in October last year.

A second round of projects began in July when 3,946 MT of rice were shipped to Baguio City, Benguet, Mt. Province, Ifugao, Kalinga, Apayao and Abra.

But this time, the rice intended for the project was shipped here by Quezon-based Bicol Regional Terminal Services and Singapore, as drawn by the logo of the sacks hauled to the city this month by nine trucks, said Nelfon Bonacilla, DSWD Cordillera director.

Day's work

A day's work rebuilding farm-to-market roads, fixing community restrooms or repairing irrigation channels means a family member will bring home 5 kg of rice.

That is 81 projects covered by the initial phase of the food-for-work projects benefited 22,680 families in the region.

For the second set of food-for-work projects, workers would take home 10 kg of rice until the rehabilitation contract is completed by August.

The projects approved by the UNWFP would benefit 71,700 families, DSWD records show.

A third round of food-for-work projects is being worked out to start in August or September.

The range of work available to villagers in province struck by Pepeng is huge because of the district in financing to rebuild damaged infrastructure and farms. With a report from Northern Luzon Inquirer Desiree Caluza

IC to strictly enforce minimum rates for property insurance

Recognizing the dangers of underwriting premium rates, the Insurance Commission ordered recently all insurance companies to observe the minimum prescribed rates in insuring their houses and other properties against natural calamities.

In his circular number 21-2010, Insurance Commissioner Sanyogo Rimando said underwriting rates would jeopardize the financial solvency of insurance companies and their ability to settle claims.

He also noted that the top insurance companies in the country relative to their property insurance portfolios have already agreed not to undercut rates and signed a "declaration of mutual covenant and undertaking" wherein they pledged to observe the prescribed rates for natural perils.

The Insurance Commission prescribes a minimum rate of 0.10 percent of the total insured amount for natural risks such as earthquakes and volcanic eruption, 0.05 percent for typhoons and flood. These rates are added to the basic property insurance that usually covers only fire and lightning.

In the past, insurance companies were undercutting premium rates just to get a bigger chunk of the property insurance business. Such a practice, according to Rimando, endangers the industry in the long run because it could lead to non-payment of claims by certain insurance companies due to lack of reserve funds.

In the same circular, Rimando deputized the Philippine Insurers and Reinsurers Association (PIRA) to monitor compliance and report violations.

PIRA is the umbrella organization of 35 non-life insurance companies in the Philippines.

PIRA Chairman Michael Bellosa said Rimando's circular is beneficial to all, especially to the consuming public which relies on insurance as a tool in protecting their most precious assets such as their houses and its contents.

"By observing the correct rates, insurance companies can assure that they will have sufficient reserve funds to pay their claims if and when a natural calamity strikes," he said.

The insurance industry paid more than P15 billion last year due to floods caused by typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng.

Bellosa noted that the public does not need to worry about the financial capability of the industry as it is strictly regulated by the Insurance Commission.

"The Philippine insurance industry is one of the most stable in the world. The only reason why a minimum rate is enforced is to prevent a fatal practice from becoming a habit which in the long run will affect the ability of some companies to pay claims," he said.

"Insurance is a device where people who face a common peril contribute to a common fund, out of which those who suffer a loss due to such peril are indemnified. We have to ensure that the common fund is large enough to pay for a catastrophic such as a earthquake Ondoy or worse a major earthquake," he added.

People from all walks of life honor Cory

From page A1

one extraordinary woman who in so many milestones in her life had already made the impossible possible," he said.

Mr. Aquino acknowledged that more it and for her death, he would not have run for president.

Clamor for change

Just a month into office, Mr. Aquino called on the people to rally behind his platform of good governance.

"The clamor of our people for change is so deep, and so widely expressed, that some of us can afford to be bystanders," he said. "Join me in the path to justice, to genuine order and development, in the journey to social freedom for all our citizens," he added to Filipinos.

Mr. Aquino said his four sisters also served as a marker for restoring City for her "heroic stand on democracy."

The 1986 election marks the pivotal 1986 snap election in which Cory, the politically inexperienced widow of slain opposition leader Benigno Aquino Jr., challenged the 20-year rule of dictator Ferdinand Marcos. The Lo Sale quite then served as some for the election quick count.

Yesterday's commemoration, dubbed "The Legacy, One Promise: The People's Tribute to Cory Aquino," drew 1,500 to 2,000 people, mostly from the government and the media class.

Among those in attendance were Vice President Jejomar Binay, Mr. Aquino's running mate Mar Roxas, the President's girlfriend Shamini Solichol, and members of his Cabinet.

Solichol attended the Mass for quietly left soon as the program ended. She was seated several lawmen from her boyfriend, who was on the front row between his brother-in-law Agapito Aquino and sister Pinky.

A Church leader done to the Aquino family reminded the Filipinos not to perpetuate the "bad apple" system which he supposedly inherited, and has been shackled to a smooth transfer of power at the end of his six-year term.

"As we continue to lead us to the land of our dreams, do not forget June 30, 2016—make it easy for your successor," Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Socrates Villegas said in his homily.

"You know how hard it is to inherit a corrupt system. Don't do it to your successor," Socrates stressed.

A prayerful Cory

Villegas described the late Cory Aquino as "our most prayerful President who never missed a chance to encourage us to pray and whose example of prayer translated into her life, was a source of inspiration for so many."

"The memory of this Cory teacher on the greatness of simplicity," he said. "She gave us her time when she was very busy and yet she remained detached and unaffected by the vagaries of power and prestige."

Villegas, a vocal critic of Mr. Aquino's predecessor Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, also commended the President "for restoring our trust in government and for showing that public officials are indeed honorable people."

Kris: 'Promise kept'

Earlier in the day a statue struck crowd greeted the arrival of Cory's celebrity daughter Kris at the Aquino Shrine at the corner of Ilaan Boulevard and Padre Burgos Street in Makati.

Addressing about 800 supporters from the center of her platform, Kris said the campaign slogan of the aquino siblings described the passing year since Cory's death in a big journey for the Aquino-Cojuangco family.

"Mom, we fulfilled our promise to you," said Kris, a popular and often controversial TV talk show host and commercial endorser. "We loved one another and became united nations. I know you are at peace and happy."

'Shoot it out'

But till Friday of your government and problems and he will find a way to resolve them. I have only one request, if he is doing his job well and he has done good for us, shoot it out. Let her finally be done. Okay?" she told the crowd.

"He has nobody to love," she said, apparently alluding to Mr. Aquino remaining a bachelor at 55.

"But he loves each and every person in this country. He loves Philippines to us, and if he is to express this, Cory him back Cha love and service he has dedicated to you," Kris said.

Vows before the grave

Later on the afternoon, President Aquino visited the family members, friends and supporters in prayer before the graves of the late former president and that of her husband, the assassinated of the President, at Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque City.

"If we can promise that everyday we pray for President Aquino, that he will be the greatest president of our time, can we promise?" Caroline Aquino said, kneels Ballag Hiding Viel and Kris at the grave site at around 5 p.m.

"This is Cory speaks," Sebastian Sayoney Senin Lolaro said, closing the gray skies and the occasional clap of thunder. It rained when Cory was buried on Aug. 5 in Manila Memorial Park.

Ordinary Filipinos also stopped to the cemetery "to felt the vast also met mother," said Carmen Amado-Cruz, who laid flowers at Cory's grave.

Her favorite songs

With an electric guitar and a portable sound system, retired JOPD4 Nestor M. Duncan arrived at the cemetery as early as 7 a.m. and started playing right away taking requests from visitors.

He was still singing for Inner Cory when more Cory admirers began arriving in the afternoon.

The former police officer said he was with the Presidential Security Group (PSG) during the Cory administration, and that "she used to request those songs" as social functions in Malacañang. "That's why I'm here," he said.

His repertoire included "I Can't Stop Loving You," "The Wonder of You," "Don't Forget to Remember Me," "I Need to Be Near You."

In Iloilo, members of the local chapter of the Nationalist Aquino for President Movement (NAPM) and other allied volunteers wore yellow—the Aquino campaign color—in memory of the deceased matriarch.

NAPM Iloilo coordinator Ines Carbagena offered a prayer over "Tinay Talk," his group's radio program on DYR.

Only leader Princess Nora Aquino, one of the "yellow volunteers" who served as Cory's spokesperson, aided the gathering

AN OPEN LETTER TO P-NOY

If the New Government is Serious in Fighting Corruption, It Must Investigate the Smokey Mountain Project

A two-page advertisement recently appeared in newspapers with the title "Who Benefited from the Smokey Mountain Project?" It tried to doodorize the implementation by R-II Builders, Inc – owned by father and son Reghis and Michael Romero – of the controversial project once dubbed by Senator Miriam Defensor-Santiago as the "most lopsided" in Philippine history.

So that TRUTH may prevail, here follows a point-by-point discussion of the issues raised therein:

1. The issue is not the legality of the original Smokey Mountain project as affirmed by the Supreme Court, but the excessive payment being demanded by R-II. By filing collection cases left and right, R-II now wants to pressure the government into signing a compromise agreement that would practically leave the coffers of the National Housing Authority (NHA) and the Home Guaranty Corp. (HGC) empty.

2. R-II demands P1.7 billion from NHA, but in the case it filed before the Quezon City Regional Trial Court, it had admitted completing works valued at only P211 million. Of the P1.7 billion, the NHA has already paid R-II P806 million, without the approval of Commission on Audit. Is it not questionable to demand P1.7 billion for actual work done amounting to only P211 million?

3. Under the joint venture, R-II was supposed to fully fund the P6.6 billion project, but it managed to raise only P300 million. Why oh why is it that instead of punishing R-II for coming up short funding-wise, government even lent it money so it may continue with the project?

4. Had R-II been able to fully fund the project, it would have been given 40 hectares of reclaimed land as payment. Logic dictates that it should not get the 40 hectares for its failure to put up the P6.6 billion. But how come R-II ever ended up being given not just 40 hectares but 79 hectares for reneging on its funding obligation? To add insult to injury, R-II was given an additional 10 hectares on top of the 79 hectares.

5. The reclaimed lands should be owned by HGC because it made the guarantee of earnings for the government agencies Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), Social Security System (SSS), Landbank, Pag-Ibig and Abot-Kaya Pabahay Fund – that had to come to R-II's rescue by forming an Asset Pool. But instead of turning over the 79 hectares to HGC when a call was made on its guarantee, R-II took control of the land (including the vastly profitable Harbour Center Industrial Park) and rented it out. To date, R-II has yet to remit a single centavo of the rentals amounting now to millions of pesos.

6. The only valid claim of R-II is its subordinated Smokey Mountain Project Participation Certificate covering its share in the combined assets of the Smokey Mountain Project. But it cannot impose its ownership of lands that are really owned by HGC.

7. R-II also wrested from HGC ownership of the bulk of shares of stock of Harbour Center. The Smokey Mountain Project Asset Pool (now owned by HGC by virtue of a Deed of Assignment) bought shares of Harbour Center worth P1.7 billion equivalent to 10 hectares of reclaimed land. But R-II did not issue any stock certificate. Apart from this, the common shares previously worth P807 million had been reduced in value by half because of claimed losses and purchase of equipment. All this was not approved by the Asset Pool governing body nor by HGC.

8. Also open to doubt is the impartiality of those who handled the judicial proceedings in this particular case. Recently, the Court of Appeals' Special 18th Division made a complete turn-around and sided with R-II. The court decision paved the way for the expected annulment of the Deed of Assignment/Conveyance of the Asset Pool of SMDRP on the ground that this was not notarized. Based on the rules of evidence, the validity of a document is not established by a notary public.

9. The headache had the then Vice President and housing czar Noli de Castro saying that: "There is no agreement and plan to sign any compromise agreement with Reghis Romero. That is not on our agenda and there's not enough time." But how come VP De Castro sent then President Arroyo a memorandum seeking release of P1.46 billion for payment to HGC, the very exact amount cited in the basis for compromise agreement that was supposed to be signed by R-II, NHA and HGC?

IT IS VERY CLEAR WHO BENEFITED FROM SMOKEY MOUNTAIN PROJECT.
IT IS NOT THE POOR, NOT THE FILIPINO PEOPLE,
ONLY R-II BUILDERS INC. AND SOME PUBLIC OFFICIALS.

GARBAGE PROJECT Is it right for Reghis Romero to demand that he be paid P1.7 billion for a housing project that actually cost his company only P211 million to build? Can this (kindly look at the picture of the dilapidated structure amidst garbage) be worth P211 million, much more P1.7 billion?

'KUNG WALANG CORRUPT, WALANG MAHIRAP!'
- Pres. Noynoy Aquino

BIR 106th Anniversary

"Tamang Buwis Ay Bayaran Nang Maluwag Ang Kaharapan"

Ang Inyong BIR Handang Maglingkod:

A Taxpayer Service Embodiment

By Raymundo T. de la Cruz

If there is one thing that every taxpayer must see and experience when visiting the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), it must be the Taxpayer Service Areas (TSAs) established in all BIR offices rendering frontline services to taxpayers.

The TSA is the main component of the BIR's institutionalized Handang Maglingkod Project (HMP).

The institutionalization became inevitable following the huge success of the project in 2009 and previous years when the HMP was lauded as one big leap for the BIR in its quest for service excellence as an institution. The HMP is today the subject of study, evaluation and possible adoption by other offices that witnessed the transformation of many BIR frontline offices into service-oriented units.

TSAs provide a specific reception area for taxpayers transacting with the BIR. While they promote the delivery of fast, efficient, courteous and yet, smiling service to taxpayers, they serve as one-stop-shops to address taxpayer needs without the necessity of a follow up or referral to other offices.

In compliance with Republic Act 9403 or the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007, TSAs are open from 8 o'clock in the morning to past 5 o'clock in the afternoon with NO NOON BREAK. They likewise provide taxpayers accurate information on taxations, including office procedures as embodied in the agency's Citizen's Charter and its services that will respond to their specific needs or requirements.

TOP SECRETARIES—Bureau of Internal Revenue Commissioner Kim S. Jacinto-Henares (seated, center) is flanked by BIR Deputy Commissioners, from left: Marietta G. Lorenzo, Celia C. King, Nelson M. Aspe, Estela V. Suñio, Lilia C. Guillermo, and Lucita G. Rodriguez. Standing at the back are the Assistant Commissioners of the BIR.

A key feature of the TSA is the administration of a taxpayer service satisfaction survey which will give the BIR an idea of the kind of service it renders to the taxpayers. The survey also provides a means for taxpayers to ventilate their complaints and make their comments and suggestions. Together with the manual log books maintained in every TSA, this survey system has now been strengthened with the introduction of the e-Registry System that ensures feedback of taxpayers on their experiences with the BIR front-liners are captured and acted electronically, open by every BIR front line officer.

As the single entry point in every BIR front line office, the TSAs offer every comfort and convenience that a customer service unit can offer to its clients. All services including but not limited to services, public assistance and complaints desk, cash values and TIN verification counters, taxpayers' counters and lounges, nursing rooms and differently-abled persons' lanes, and other related services (e.g. health station) are available in the said area.

Tables, chairs, dedicated telephone lines and even computers for taxpayers' use are likewise required features of the TSAs. Added bonus for existing and waiting taxpayers in the provision of goodies, water and coffee for their consumption while looking at television monitors featuring tax information matters and other materials including video presentations.

To keep viewing taxpayers informed and updated, information materials are made available for their perusal including dissemination of various taxpayer activities and programs. Pictures, procedures and issuances are likewise available for their easy reference through bulletin boards posted in strategic places.

To ensure that taxpayers are better served by competent and well-informed revenue service front liners, revenue personnel are tested by participating organizations (PICPA, IBP and PICE) especially during the evaluation period.

The Heads of offices (Revenue District Officers and Division Chiefs) are interviewed to gauge their awareness of and involvement in taxpayer service functions and programs. Their Assistants (Assistant Revenue District Officers and Assistant Division Chiefs) are tested on their awareness of and involvement in taxpayer evaluation and feedback system.

On the other hand, the TSA personnel, a key component in the said service area, are tested by way of interview and telephone inquiry on their involvement and knowledge of taxpayer transaction requirements.

The HMP under the administration of BIR Commissioner Kim Jacinto-Henares will no doubt provide better, faster and more efficient service to taxpayers. In fact, Commissioner Henares made it clear during her first day of office that she will dispense with unnecessary requirements that prolong and make it difficult for transactions to be completed. Making things easier for taxpayers to transact their business with BIR thus will promote greater voluntary compliance.

With HMP, one can only say: "Come in and feel the 'nanunuyong pagtitinghod ng BIR sa bayan' experience."

And on the occasion of the BIR's 106th anniversary, the BIR will honor twenty (20) Outstanding HMP Nanunuyong Magtitinghod sa Bayan awardees with plaques of appreciation to further accentuate the importance that the tax agency gives to taxpayer service—excellence.

Truth body told: Take no prisoners

From page A1

nize" to those cases by filing "appropriate cases against those involved, if warranted," and to render a comprehensive final report on or before Dec. 23, 2012.

The definition of the scope of the cases the commission will investigate and the deadline for the submission of its report appeared to reassure that the backlogging would not be repeated and real results would be shown.

The deadline ruled out irresponsible, if not unrealistic, mandates. It considered the Discussion code spelled out by Aquino in his inaugural speech: "To those who talk about reconciliation, I say this: more than they would like us to simply forget about the past, we must learn from it in order to rise. There can be no reconciliation without justice. When we allow crimes to go unpunished, we give consent to their recurring ever and ever again."

In a word, the order to the commission is: Take no prisoners.

Aquino's battle cry

The order said the commission was "shall pursue the truth and find the truth, and toward this end, investigate reports of graft and corruption of such scale and magnitude that shock and offend the moral and ethical sensibilities of the people," committed by public officials and employees, including those in the private sector.

It seized the commission with powers that would enable it to recommend "the prosecution of the offenders and secure justice for all."

The focus of the commission's task reflects the main concept of the administration. The order emphasized that the President's "battle cry" during the election campaign—"Kung walang corrupt, walang mahirap" his one will be poor if no one is corrupt—expressed a philosophical, if elected, he would end corruption.

The limited scope of the commission's inquiry was quickly noted. It excludes coverage of human rights abuses, the worst feature of the Dedo administration established in several countries emerging from civil conflicts and in transition from authoritarian regimes to democratic systems.

The Philippines has one of the highest records of human rights abuses, including summary executions, during the past nine years.

A departure

The Philippine Truth Commission departed from South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission model that had put more emphasis on reconciliation than on judicial retribution.

The Philippine model is a *sui generis* but mostly shaded by Amnesty precedent, whatever path Chief Justice PPTA in 2007, at least 32 truth commissions were established in 28 countries.

Amnesty reports that truth commissions have been established to afford, temporary, official and legitimate bodies to investigate the pattern of abuses of human rights and to establish the truth. More, unclaimed their work with a final report containing findings of fact and recommendations.

Wikipedia defines a truth or reconciliation commission as a mechanism tasked with "with discovering and revealing past wrongdoings by a government ... to the hope of resolving conflict left over from the past."

They are occasionally set up by rulers emerging from periods of internal tyranny, civil war or dictatorship, Wikipedia says. It cites South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, established by President Nelson Mandela after the dismantling of apartheid. It mentions the South African commission as a popular model whose results have rarely been adhered to other commissions.

Philippine model

Truth commissions are sometimes criticized for allowing crimes to go unpunished and existing impunity by restore human rights abuses.

But the Philippine model, which studied other models, including those in Latin America, does not mandate an investigation beyond corruption cases.

According to Wikipedia, the South African commission was a court like executive body for public hearings were seen as a crucial component of the transition to a full and free democracy in South Africa.

This is not the case in the transition from the Arroyo to the Aquino administration, which has underlined corruption as the central issue of Philippine democracy.

Amnesty applications were reviewed by the South African commission. The majority inquests covered the human rights abuses in both the white-minority regime and the black African National Congress.

The amnesty aspect is widely perceived as responsible for the success of conciliatory approach in fostering unity in post-apartheid South Africa. While the approach did not result in prosecutions, it is acknowledged to have produced authentic inclusive.

Nuremberg way

There is still debate over the success of the South Africa model because The "Nuremberg method" word is prosecuting Nazi war crimes after the defeat of Germany in World War II. The Nuremberg tribunals set up by the allies to extradition cases sent a number of Nazi officials to the gallows.

Despite the debate over a sweeping political reform purge "to rid Erasmus society ruthless, pious, economic, judicious and politics of any remnants of the Marcos regime."

The Aquino administration set established in the context of political transition, in an entire political system. The current determines the shape of the commission's institutional scope of the inquiry.

The order is point for the truth commission established in the transition of certain South American regimes—for example, in the case of disappeared persons in the Argentinian military coup d'état in 1976, and in the overthrow of the Marcos regime in Salvador adopted in Chile in the 1973 coup d'état by Gen. Augusto Pinochet.

No coincidence

The control determined the nature and scope of the inquiry into the human rights atrocities of the Arroyo years by the commission set up by the Arroyo regime of President Paul Alfonzo after the fall of the former to following Argentina's defeat in the Falklands War.

Albania, upon being elected president, created the military amnesty that led to the brief before the military leaders left office, and asked for the prosecution of some junta leaders.

Mr. Aquino's truth commission was not established in the transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic one. The new administration took office in an election widely recognized as free and legitimate.

The President's order has steered the commission with powers to subpoena witnesses and legal weapons that would help it to discharge its mandate to make a report and recommend prosecutions.

Its report has to go to the Office of the Ombudsman, which has the power to indict corruption cases.

That side of the Final Four still hangs in the balance of to the Aces outlay hoped a Game 7 behind a for and send a to Finals that appointed Bib 'N Tear, 99-93.

GERRY Game 6 round notice for on from the effort it dished out two-eighth before when the Hotshots stood allow with an RELIEF win.

LATE SPORTS

Beermen advance to finals

JAMES HERNANDEZ
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
7:14 PM • October 01, 2010

By Maureen R. Castillo

HAVING MET 16 for of two-title and hunger the time, San Miguel finally event finals to Derby Ace's game challenge with a 91-82 Game 6 victory that sent the Beermen into the PBA Fiesta Conference title series of the former to Coliseum in Quezon City.

Joy Mortalgren and Arsenal James took turns in hurting the Llanadas down the stretch in the Beermen closed out the rugged four-conference series. L.J. and were saved a championship playoff for coming from to the Manila 108-91 first series.

That side of the Final Four still hangs in the balance of to the Aces outlay hoped a Game 7 behind a for and send a to Finals that appointed Bib 'N Tear, 99-93.

GERRY Game 6 round notice for on from the effort it dished out two-eighth before when the Hotshots stood allow with an RELIEF win.

President defends truth commission

From page A1

doing is right or we will continue with it," he said.

The body will have a total five commissioners, headed by Justice Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. It is still to based at the old SEC building of the Vera Financial at the Philippine International Convention Center building.

'Constitutionally suspect'

Mr. Aquino said he already had the names of at least three other nominees for the commission, but their papers had yet to be completed.

"I want the commission to be independent," he said.

Mr. Aquino issued Executive Order No. 1 creating the commission on Friday. He gave the body until Dec. 31, 2012, to provide closure to the scandals that shook the previous administration of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

He said he considers who were allies of his now when she was the President have questioned the creation of the commission, including whether it could legally make by virtue of its executive order alone.

Yesterday Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago questioned the powers granted to the commission and said Executive Order No. 1 might have constitutional problems. "It's constitutionality suspect," she said of the presidential order.

Veto defects

In interviews on dzSB radio, Santiago said Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile also said that while it would be ideal if Congress passed a law creating the commission, that would take a long time to do.

Santiago cited two "defects" in the executive order.

First, the commission cannot issue subpoenas that would compel witnesses to testify in hearings, she said.

Second, she said there was the question of where the government would get the funds for the body.

"The President has no power to issue subpoenas because the power belongs to the judicial branch, unless there is a law given by Congress to the President to issue the power of subpoenas," Santiago said.

She said Mr. Aquino could only go so far as authorizing the conduct of preliminary investigations since state prosecutors were part of the executive branch.

If the commission cannot issue subpoenas and witnesses will not appear at its hearings, Santiago asked how then would the public know the truth about the allegations of corruption during Arroyo's time.

Enrile's questions

Enrile said the Senate was a need to define well the jurisdiction of the commission so that it would not overlap the work of the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Office of the Ombudsman.

"Otherwise, the commission will collide with the two agencies," he said.

Enrile also asked what would be the effect of the findings of the commission.

"Will it be final for the prosecutor? Will it be the case in the case in court or DOJ? And if the DOJ won't accept its findings, what's its use then?" he said.

"You really have to define well the jurisdiction of the commission ... so that there won't be any trouble," Enrile said.

He said Mr. Aquino's advisers should leave the crafting of the executive order to expert lawyers.

Human rights cases

Two groups which led in exposing human rights violations under the Arroyo administration expressed dismay that the commission would not investigate the many cases of unexplained deaths and disappearances of activists and journalists during the previous administration.

The human rights group Karapatan said the inclusion of Executive Order 1 under the Aquino administration was also cases "of such scale and magnitude that shock and offend the moral and ethical sensibilities of the people."

"We urge the fervent supporters to look back on the backgrounds of the panel and really go after human rights violations, not only the corrupt and thieves, so that impunity will be ended and a really new beginning for the country will come about," Karapatan said in a statement.

Bayan secretary-general Renato Reyes Jr. said he saw a "superficial scope" that truth commissions were historically formed to investigate human rights violations, such as those in Africa and Latin America, and yet the Philippine Truth Commission would not look into such violations.

Acting Court of Appeals justice said the creation of the commission "is interesting," considering the increasing volume of investigations being conducted by government agencies.

Teodoro Regino, president of the Association of Retired Court of Appeals Justices Inc., said Senate Minority Leader Edcel Lagman's contention that the commission would merely duplicate the functions of other agencies mandated to investigate corruption was "an argument against its creation." With reports from Nikko Dizon in Manila, and Gabriel Cardenas, Inquirer Northern Luzon

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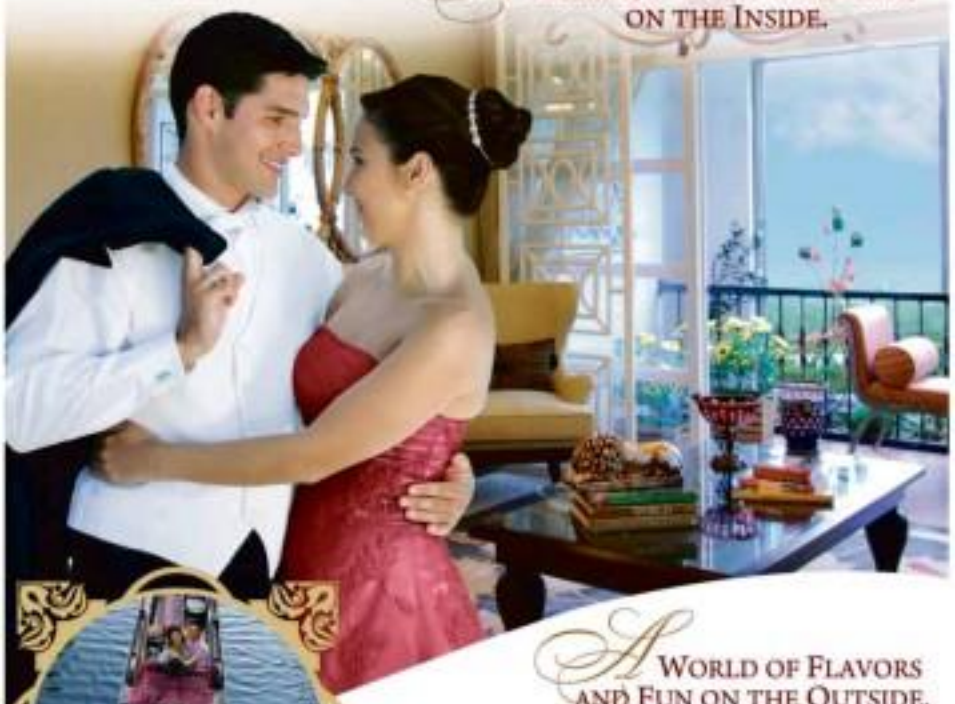

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DID YOU KNOW

THE THREE most common names given to Filipino children in 2009 were Andrea, John Rhichard Christopher Jose, and Angel. Angelica and Glenda for girls.
(JOVIC DIMAANO, Inquirer Research)

8,900 EXEMPTIONS REVOKED

Number coding back in full force

By Miko Maralit

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority (MMDA) is revoking effective today the exemptions to the number coding scheme issued to 8,900 motorists.

MMDA General Manager Robert Sarmiento yesterday said that from now on, only the following vehicles would be exempted from the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program (UVVRP):

These are cargo trucks, ambulances, fire trucks, police and military vehicles, diplomatic vehicles with corresponding plates, government vehicles with government plates or appropriate markings or stickers issued by the Land Transportation Office, duly accredited school buses, company shuttle service vehicles, official media vehicles with markings, duly accredited tow trucks, vehicles delivering perishable goods and vehicles used by medical practitioners.

Earlier, MMDA Chair Fenrie Tolentino said he would order the immediate revocation of all UVVRP exemptions to improve traffic flow in the metropolis and to ensure equal treatment for all motorists.

He added that the exemptions were "a privilege, not a right" and that these could be revoked anytime.

The MMDA, however, has yet to determine whether or not it would return the P300 fee paid by each of the 8,900 motorists who were issued exemptions which should have been valid until the end of September.

MMDA spokesperson Fritz Gonzales said Tolentino had asked the Commission on Audit (COA) if the agency could issue a refund.

"We already asked the COA and we will hear advice on whether it recommends," he said in a text message to reporters.

Tolentino had said in a previous interview that he was considering issuing movie passes to the Metro Manila Film Fest, which is organized yearly by the MMDA, to motorists whose exemptions would be revoked, instead of refunding their payments.

REMEMBERING CORY
Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, actress-TV host Kris Aquino and her son, Bimby Jarnes, remember Aquino's mother, former President Corazon "Cory" Aquino, in a ceremony marking her first death anniversary at the Aquino Park on Roxas Boulevard.
(JG)

Police arrest 2 con men in QC, Caloocan

By Mercy C. Cornejal

THE POLICE arrested the other day two suspected members of a big time swindling syndicate which preys on electrical supply firms during consumers' operations conducted in Quezon City and Caloocan.

Supt. Antonio Yarra, chief of Quezon City Police District's Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit, identified those arrested as Glenn Cusanay, 32, and Arnulfo Sarmo Jr., 48, both residents of Sta. Cruz, Manila.

Yarra said they were going after other members of the group known only as George, Melboy, Paul Ramos, Belinda Mission and a J. Aquino.

According to Yarra, the group had claimed to be employees of Manila Electric Co.

"But a check with the company confirmed that those people were not connected with them," he said.

Modus operandi

He added that the group's modus operandi was to order a huge volume of electrical supplies from a firm and pay for these with a fake check.

The group usually placed its order on weekends, giving the company no time to determine whether or not the check it had been issued was authentic.

Then said the points that arrested Cusanay when he arrived at an electrical supply shop in Quezon City at around 2:30 p.m. on Saturday in a Toyota Hiace to pick up the group's order of a huge volume of circuit breakers.

Behind him him was a fake check and a letter signed by Henry authorizing him to pick up the delivery.

During questioning, Cusanay confessed to the crime and said he had been ordered to deliver the electrical supplies in Sarmo.

The police then decided to launch another operation, leading to the arrest of Sarmo on the Aurea Street in Caloocan City on the same day.

Two more members of the gang were reportedly in the area but they fled in another vehicle when they saw the police.

Yarra said they decided to conduct the entrapment operations when an electrical company outfit their assistance right after another firm lost at least P1.2 million worth of electrical supplies to the gang.

The firm company said that earlier, they received a call from a man who had introduced himself as Paul Ramos, an operations manager of Abesil Shopping Ctr.

Henry said the company wanted to buy a huge volume of circuit breakers from the electrical shop.

Later on, a woman who introduced herself as Belinda Mission and said she was an employee of the same shopping company, went to the shop office to have to confirm the transaction. She also faxed a purchase order bearing the name of the shopping company which was signed by herself and a J. Aquino.

The shop workers, however, grew suspicious when they called up the shopping company and learned that the people behind the transaction were not their employees.

Citizen's call

Drug den in Mandaluyong?

Anti-drug agents in Mandaluyong City Brazilian mechanic check complaints from several residents of Barangay Pangapo about the rebirth of burning marijuana leaves in a 4-storey house by Ruby Industrial Corp. close to the Sky Cable Compound. Squatters occupying the area indicate a young man who was recently caught selling shabu with a couple and two more groups are trading.

Abby, 21, Mandaluyong City

Sidewalks lost to shops

La Salle Street in Caloocan is no more sidewalks because these are being occupied by motorcycles and big trucks. A roadside shop and a barber shop cover their part of the sidewalk with mirrors and metal benches. Pedestrians have no choice but to walk on the road.

Alvin, 22, Caloocan City

Jeepney barkers block road

Jeepney barkers at the corner of Real Avenue and Blumentritt block the road leading to the market. Even though the area is near the MPD Station 2, the barkers are still there. They pressure it's either they're paying off the police, or the police is blind. Football is happening around there.

A., 30, Manila

Bookies still at it in Tondo

It's really frustrating that some bookies continue to operate here in Tondo, Manila. We need genuine commitment on the part of the city government and police to stop this illegal activity.

Larry, 29, Manila

Corrupt system at NBI office

Bribe me someone else can NBI security officer at Old Post Office. Many bonded licensed guns are causing fear. There's a corrupt system known at the NBI satellite office in Las Piñas. They give you a number but there are many teams. For P500, you can cut in line.

Citizen Cardo, 30, Las Piñas

Cops needed on Pedro Gil

Our police are needed today before we go and vote on Pedro Gil. Manila Jaywalking is an act. Paul College, Malayan Jong nakukuha kong anak ibenta dahil wala akong pambibigay. Ilang anak ibenta dahil wala akong pambibigay. Ilang ang mga pulis dito? Ilan ang mga pulis dito? Ilang ang mga pulis dito? Ilang ang mga pulis dito? Ilang

Dutch troops end mission, leave Afghan war void

KABUL—Dutch troops ended their mission in Afghanistan on Sunday after four "proud" years, in a departure experts say signals the beginning of a drawdown of Europe's forces that will leave a worrying void.

The pull-out is the first significant drawdown of troops from the Afghan war, now in its ninth year, and comes as Taliban-led violence worsens and US forces suffered their worst month for casualties.

A Dutch embassy official in Kabul said a small "change of command" ceremony and reception was held at the main military base in central Uruzgan province where most of the country's 1,900 soldiers have been deployed.

Nato's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which had asked the Dutch to extend their mission by a year, paid tribute to the Netherlands' contribution, and said it would maintain its current capacity in the area.

"Dutch forces have served with distinction in Uruzgan, and we honor their sacrifices and that of their Afghan counterparts during the Netherlands' tenure in the province," Major Joel Harper, an ISAF spokesperson, said in a statement.

"We have planned for the transfer to the next multinational operation to ensure a smooth transition. We will maintain current capabilities," he said. The Netherlands' deployment began in 2006 and has cost the lives of 24 soldiers. Nato's request for an extension of the mission sparked a political row that led to the Dutch government's collapse in February and the announced drawdown.

Nato and the United States have close to 150,000 troops in the country but, a mounting death toll for foreign troops has gilded pullout pressure on the US and its allies as voters grow increasingly weary of the blood price of the war.

The death toll for US soldiers in July was an all-time high of 66. A total of 606 foreign troops have died in the Afghan war so far this year, according to an AFP tally based on figures by the icasualties.org website.

A Netherlands foreign ministry official said all soldiers would return home by September, while most hardware, including four F-16 fighter jets, three Chinook and five Apache helicopters, would be back by the year's end.

In central Uruzgan province, the Dutch leave Nato has been less on combat operations, and more on their "3-D" approach of defense, development and diplomacy, which has been held up as a benchmark for other missions.

"The international community and Nato are building Afghanistan stand on its own legs...The Netherlands has done its duty and fought for the security and reconstruction of Afghanistan," said Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Maxime Verhagen in a statement.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai thanked the Netherlands "for the work that Dutch soldiers and development workers have done, and are still doing, in building the country." But the Taliban remain very active in the province, where opium production is high, and the insurgents have welcomed the Dutch withdrawal, urging other countries to follow suit. AFP

DIMAS Jose Aliprandi (left) and Elton Plaiser, switched at birth, pose for pictures in Santa Maria de Jetiba, Espirito Santo state, Brazil. —

Brazilian men swapped at birth work, live together

SAO PAULO—Two years back, Jhonne Aliprandi and Elton Plaiser didn't know of each other's existence. Now they know they have been accidentally switched at birth more than 20 years ago.

The discovery didn't bring bitterness or recrimination. Rather, it led to the creation of a bigger family.

Today, the two 20-year-olds are living and working together with both sets of parents growing vegetables and coffee on a small farm in southeastern Brazil.

The chain of events started with Aliprandi, who says always intrigued that he did not resemble the four sisters he grew up with.

"Those were rumors being differences," he told The Associated Press by phone. "I had blond hair and blue eyes and my sisters had dark hair and eyes.

"I had the typical features of a descendant of German immigrants, while my sisters and parents were of Italian stock. Something did not add up."

Aliprandi said he was 16 when his suspicions intensified after undergoing a TV versus repair—in his line getting included at birth because of mistakes at hospitals.

"I told my father of my doubts and that I wanted to do a DNA test. But it was too expensive for the family," he said.

A decade later, Aliprandi did it anyhow on his own.

"In December 2008, when I was 26, I decided I needed an answer to my doubts and paid 300 reals ($166) for a DNA test that confirmed my suspicions that I was not the birth son of the mom and woman who had raised me," he said.

It was a big shock for his parents, Zilda and Antonio Aliprandi. They at first refused to believe the results, but eventually decided to help him look for his biological parents.

The search began at the Mother Virgina Protomarco Hospital, where he was born.

"I showed the hospital the results of the DNA test and told them that they proved that I had been switched at birth," Aliprandi said.

But hospital officials were stop-lipped, he said, and asked him to have another DNA test, which he did three months later.

Repeated calls to the hospital for comment went unanswered.

The DNA results were the same as the first—Aliprandi had been given to the wrong mother as an infant.

He said the hospital then searched its records and found Elton Plaiser was born there on the same day.

The records led Aliprandi to the 19-Mexican farm where Plaiser lived with his parents, Silvia and Adelson, in the town of Santa Maria de Jetiba, about 45 kilometers from the Aliprandi home in Joao Neiva.

The Plaisers agreed to the DNA tests.

"They discovered that Elton was the biological son of the man and woman that I had been calling Mom and Dad for 20 years," Aliprandi said. "Meanwhile, Elton discovered that the couple he had always regarded as his biological parents were mine."

The discovery did not create any upset, he said.

"Instead it sparked a desire to join our families," Alipranda said. "Elton and I wanted to remain with those who raised us and catch our birth parents. We wanted to expand our families."

So about a year ago, Alipranda and the parents who raised him accepted an offer from the Plaisers to move to their farm, where they built a home.

Alipranda and Plaiser both feel blessed by their new circumstances.

"It's not everyone who can say he has two fathers and two mothers living together with him," Alipranda said. AP

Obama immigration policy aims to help families of US servicemen

THE OBAMA administration, responding to requests from Democratic and Republican lawmakers, has taken steps to make it easier for illegal immigrants who are spouses and family members of Americans serving in the military to gain legal status.

The new policy was described to an internal memorandum from the Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) that was released last week by Sen. Charles E. Grassley of Iowa, and caused a furor in Washington on Friday.

The memo outlined measures that the agency could take under existing laws to "reduce the threat of removal for certain individuals present in the United States without authorization," instead of waiting for Congress to pass an immigration overhaul to give legal status to millions of illegal immigrants.

While the title "Administrative Alternatives to Comprehensive Immigration Reform," the memo prompted protests from Grassley and other Republicans that the Obama administration was trying a run around Congress, rather than endorse a bipartisan defeater on immigration legislation during an election season. The memo was first reported on the website of The National Review, a conservative magazine.

Officials of the immigration agency denied on Friday that they were pursuing any plan to legalize millions of illegal immigrants by fiat.

Aside from a title that administration officials acknowledged was provocative, the memo describes possible changes in the immigration agency's interpretation of immigration law, including several that have been recommended by lawmakers from both parties to make it easier for immigrants who are trying to work within the system to gain legal status.

According to the memo, one of those changes has been quietly put into practice since May. The new policy allows illegal immigrants who are spouses, parents and children of American citizens serving in the military to complete the process of becoming legal residents without having to leave the US, a provision that is known in immigration law terms as granting parole.

In a letter on July 9, 18 members of the House, including nine Republicans, urged Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano to make broader use of that measure and to extend it to "provide some relief" to service-duty soldiers with close relatives who did not have legal immigration status.

Department of Homeland Security officials estimate that many thousands of military service members have close relatives who are illegal immigrants. Under a legal Catch-22 in immigration law, those families could face as much as 10 years of separation if the immigrant relative leaves the US to pursue a legal visa. The new policy adopted by the immigration agency is designed to circumvent that snag. Up to now, officials said, they have applied the new policy for the military on a case-by-case basis. AFP

UAE to suspend Blackberry services on security fears

DUBAI—The United Arab Emirates will suspend use of Blackberry services in October, citing concerns about security risks, the state news agency said on Sunday.

The UAE said it would halt Blackberry services until an "acceptable solution" is developed and applied.

"It's a final decision but we are continuing discussions with them," Mohammed Al Ghanim, director general of the UAE's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) said.

"Censorship has got nothing to do with this. What we are talking about is suspension due to the lack of compliance with UAE telecommunications regulations."

The UAE shares its Blackberry data being exported offshore and managed by a "foreign, commercial operation." The regulator said Blackberry data services are the only ones operating in that method. The decision will not affect users of rival Nokia and Apple's iPhone smart phones.

"Today's decision is based on the fact that, in their current form, certain Blackberry services allow users to act without any legal accountability, causing judicial, social and national security concerns for the UAE," the state news agency said.

The suspension of Blackberry Messenger, e-mail and web browsing services, comes after attempts during back in 2009 to bring the service into line with regulations, the TRA said.

The UAE expressed concern last week that the device was open to misuse that poses security risks—a move seen as an intensification with the inability to monitor the popular Blackberry Messenger service.

"The government regards the services offered by Blackberry, especially its instant messaging, as an obstacle to its goal of reinforcing censorship, filtering and surveillance," Reporters Without Borders said in a statement on July 26. Reuters

THE BLACKBERRY Pearl smart phone —

Pakistan flood toll nears 900

PESHAWAR, Pakistan—The death toll from Pakistan's worst floods in living memory neared 900 on Sunday as outbreaks of water-borne disease emerged and penniless survivors stranded out of the raging torrents.

Up to one million people have been affected all in all, according to the UN, in a country already reeling from years of extremist bloodshed.

"Fifteen teams have found 62 more bodies from Peshawar, Charsadda and Nowshera towns since Saturday evening, making the death toll to 862," Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial information minister Mian Iftikhar Hussain said.

"This is the worst flood to the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the province's history," Hussain said.

Thousands of homes and vast swathes of farmland have been destroyed in the northwest and Pakistan Kashmir. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where many poor families live in remote mountain villages, has been the hardest-hit province.

Officials said the death toll from torrential monsoon rains, flash floods and landslides since the end of last month's deluge had now risen to more than 900. AFP

NOTICE OF JOINT PUBLIC HEARING

TO : ALL TRANSPORT LEADERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

DATE : JULY 30, 2010

Please be informed that the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) and Land Transportation Office (LTO) will jointly hold a **PUBLIC HEARING** on Friday, **August 6, 2010, 10:00** o'clock in the morning at the **Bulwagang Edu, LTO Compound, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City** on the following agenda:

1. Consultation on the draft Joint Memorandum Circular on Colorum Vehicles
2. Other matters

WITNESS the Honorable **DANTE M. LANTIN**, DOTC Assistant Secretary and Officer in Charge, LTFRB and Honorable **VIRGINIA P. TORRES, LTO** Assistant Secretary, this 30th day of July 2010.

Atty. EMMANUEL A. MAHIPUS
Executive Director, LTFRB

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Greco

Despite order, BP used too much toxic dispersant in oil spill

NEW ORLEANS—As BP inched closer to permanently sealing the blown-out well in the Gulf of Mexico, congressional investigators raided the company and the US Coast Guard for part of the cleanup effort, saying too much toxic chemical dispersant was used.

The investigators said the Coast Guard recklessly approved BP requests to use thousands of gallons of chemicals a day to break up the oil in the Gulf, despite a federal directive to use the dispersant sparingly. The Coast Guard approved 79 requests over a 40-day period after the Environmental Protection Agency order, according to documents reviewed by the investigators. Only in a small number of cases did the government scale back BP's request.

Rep. Edward Markey, a Democrat from Massachusetts, released a letter on Saturday that said that instead of complying with the EPA restriction, "BP often carpet-bombed the ocean with these chemicals and the Coast Guard allowed the company to do it."

BP did not immediately return a phone call, and a spokesperson for the Unified Command Center in New Orleans did not have an immediate comment.

While the chemical dispersant was effective in breaking up the oil into small droplets now more easily consumed by bacteria, the long-term effects to aquatic life are unknown. That environmental uncertainty has led to several spats between BP and the government over the use of dispersants on the ocean's surface and deep underwater where oil was spewing out of the well.

A temporary cap has held the gusher in check for more than two weeks, and engineers were planning to start as early as Monday on an effort to help plug the well for good. The procedure, dubbed the static kill, involves pumping mud and possibly cement into the blowout well through the top-gassy cap. If it works, it will take less time to complete a similar procedure using a relief well that is rarely complete. That effort, known as a bottom kill, should be the last step in sealing the well.

Before the static kill can take place, however, debris needs to be cleared from one of the relief wells. The debris fell in the bottom of the relief well when crews had to evacuate the site last week because of Tropical Storm Bonnie."

Companies working to plug the disaster for good are also engaged in a billion-dollar blame game. But the workers for BP Halliburton and Transocean, say the companies' adversarial relationship before Congress isn't a distraction at the site of the April 20 rig explosion, where Halliburton equipment owned by BP is shifting relief wells that Halliburton will pump cement through to permanently shake the oil well.

"Simply, we are all too professional to allow disagreements between BP and any other organization to affect our behaviors," Byron Grisk, a BP artificial safety advisor working on Development Driller II, which is drilling a back-up relief well, said in an e-mail last week.

The rules of the blame companies in the till efforts are much the same as they were on the Deepwater Horizon, the rig economy dig that blew up, killing 11 workers. The US Justice Department has opened civil and criminal investigations into the incident, hundreds of lawsuits have been filed, and congressional investigators are probing the incident and its aftermath.

Sixteenth Times, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research think tank, said the investigations may have stifled communications between the government and companies—and among the companies themselves. AP

DAYDREAM NEDAS: A young woman killed by a bullet during a protest in Tehran was mistakenly identified as Zahra Bahrani (above), whose photo was lifted from her Facebook account. AP

First mistaken as Iran martyr, then bounded

FRANKFURT, Germany—Zahra Bahrani, whom everyone calls Neda, will never forget the day she saw her death announced on television, accompanied by the picture she had posted on her Facebook page.

In Iran, it was another Iranian woman with a similar appearance and name, Neda Agha-Soltan, who was shot and killed during a demonstration in Tehran in June 2009. Her death was captured on video and posted on the Internet, becoming a symbol of the fight against the repressive government of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Soon, Soltani said, she found herself swept up in the government's efforts to counter any suggestion that its security forces had been involved in the shooting—and to deny that the woman in the video had died. Iranian intelligence officials, Soltani said, pressured her to come forward publicly to show that she was alive and denounce the shooting as faked, and threatened her when she did not comply.

Before the demonstrations, Soltani, a 27-year-old English literature student at a campus of Islamic Azad University who had not been active in politics, had been preparing for a presentation at a conference in Greece. Just days after the protests started, she fled Iran, ending up as a refugee in Germany where she was granted political asylum in March.

She consented to an interview, her first with an English-language media organization, on the condition that some details about her new life be concealed because she fears the Iranian security services.

The upheaval in Soltani's life began on June 20, 2009, when a video appeared on YouTube showing a young woman who was shot during the demonstrations.

Journalists worldwide tried to find out who the dying woman was. At some point, she was identified as Neda Agha-Soltan or Neda Soltan, a 26-year-old student at the Tehran campus of Islamic Azad University, the school with which Soltani was affiliated.

Internecine clashes across Soltani's profile on Facebook under the name Neda Soltani and copied her photo, which soon appeared all over the world in newspapers and television broadcasts, and on websites.

By June 24, the Iranian intelligence service had scanned hundreds of her friends' accounts. Finally, on July 3, the intelligence service confronted Soltani about the phone calls that she had made to Western countries, and accused her of spying, she said.

The next day Soltani fled Iran. She stayed in Turkey for nine days, then traveled to Greece and flew to Germany, where she arrived in mid-July 2009.

Enrico Maersbeg, a spokesperson for the federal office for migration and refugees, said the German government was persuaded by Soltani's account.

"If our outsiders have believed that what she has told us were true and accurate, we would not have granted her political asylum," Maersbeg said. "We do have our own sources to check if a story might be true or not." DPA

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WHAT'S INSIDE
■ SSC, Adamson clobber rivals /A30

SPORTS
Editor Teddyboy S. Molavedra
Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ochoa

■ Mazon captures World Series 10-ball crown /A31

TRUE 'N' Text spitfire Jimmy Alapag is seen (upper) spun trapped in an Alaska double team of LA Tenorio and Mark Barroca. After scoring 20 points in the first half, Alapag was a dud in the second. ALYSSA SALURSO

Aces drag Texters to do-or-die Game 7

Alaska hustle surprises TNT

By Mayang P. Carillo

ALASKA ROCKS out of the gates hard and never looked back, storming a 94-83 clobbering of Talk 'N Text last night to forge a rubber match in their PBA Finals Conference best-of-seven semifinal series at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao.

The Aces played with energy the whole game and benefited the Tropang Texters on both ends, enjoying leads of as many as 16 points early and 15 late in the fourth.

"We had a really good game in terms of our defense and pitching both sides of the ball," Alaska coach Tim Cone told reporters. "We took a little advantage of our quickness and that surprised them somewhat."

Alaska will be playing its third straight Game 7 against the same foe, with the team losing the last—in the Philippine Cup Finals two seasons ago.

"We will just come out and execute our game plan," Cone added, referring to Monday's game. "They caught us a little soft (tonight) and we were able to take advantage of that. But I don't think that they will come out the same way (for Game 7)."

"It will be 50-50," Cone said.

Diamon Simpson scored 21 points, had 18 rebounds and three blocks, and Cone used just seven more men, who contributed offensively while playing hard-nosed defense all night.

GAME'S MOST CLEAN
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10 Get Wicket
18 Interception
20 pts — Alaska
vs Talk 'N Text
"Every game, like off
8 Tips

After surging to a 28-12 lead late in the first period, the Aces kept the Texters at bay the rest of the way. Talk 'N Text came no closer than 107-86, before Alaska methodically eased ahead again.

Beyond Magnolen Ambolodto's stout jumper with 6:41 left for 87-66, and that basically doomed the Texters, who couldn't muster a last quasp attack. A Jason Castro layup got them no closer than 89-97, with 2:19 left.

Cyrus Baguio stole off Jimmy Alapag on the next Texter's play, scoring away for a layup that restored a 10-point lead, with 1:48 left.

"Up until that point, actually, we didn't feel that we were in any comfort zone," said Cone, who lauded that starting center Sonny Thoss would be out for the rest of the series because of ligament tears in his left knee.

"But dilemmas now for coach Chot Reyes, who got an unpleasant 47th birthday gift, is whether he needs to change imports because it was evident that Shawn Daniels wasn't the reason why they lost the game.

"The worst part of this loss is that we got outworked," Reyes said.

Daniels scored 16 points and had 11 rebounds, and together with Alapag, kept the Texters in the game after the Aces had taken that 16-point lead in the first period.

The game was tenuous in the first 24 minutes, as several flagrant fouls were called from, source.rawers Wilfred Steven Uyenguo of Alaska and Manny V. Pangilinan of Talk 'N Text were seen screaming in the stands.

The scores:
ALASKA 94 - Simpson 21, De Ocampo 9, Baguio 8, Jones 6, Ildefonso 6, Exciminiano 5, Mariano 5, Tenorio 5, Ambolodto 4, Banchero 4, Fonacier 3, Racal 3, Mendoza 2, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0
TALK 'N TEXT 83 - Alapag 20, Castro 13, Barroca 12, Pogoy 8, Williams 6, Ilagan 5, Quinahan 5, Aguilar 3, Castro 3, Pascual 3, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0
Quarters: 28-12, 48-38, 71-62, 94-83

Fiery Tams clip Falcons; Archers whip Tigers

By Jasmine W. Payo

DEFENSE-DRIVEN! Far Eastern University showcased its remarkable shooting this time to roll to a sixth straight triumph yesterday.

The unbeaten Tamaraws recorded the league's highest shooting percentage in seven years to clip the Adamson Falcons, 79-65, and strengthen their hold of top spot in the 72nd UAAP men's basketball tournament presenting at the Philsports Arena.

Bill Garcia led a balanced offensive with 16 points as the Tamaraws registered an impressive 57.4 percentage shooting clip and pushed the Falcons to a share of third with the idle Ateneo Blue Eagles at 3-2.

While the title-favorite Tamaraws continued to live up to their billing, La Salle's young Green Archers continued their aggressive ways by grabbing solo second after downing the University of Santo Tomas Tigers, 81-53, in the second game.

The Archers raced to a 19-point advantage, 45-26, and backed the Tigers' fourth-quarter rally to climb their fourth victory in six games. UST slipped to fifth at 2-3.

"I can't say anything more, I'm proud of the boys," said FEU coach Glenn Capacio. "From our first group to the third group, the intensity was the same. Offensively and defensively, this is our best game."

Jerry Mendoza registered with 16 points, but the Archers also drew solid games from rookies Ahmad Dambog and Luigi dela Paz.

"Our gameplan was to play defense above the three-point area because we know UST loves to shoot," said La Salle coach Dindo Pumaren.

The Tamaraws' shooting clip was the highest since Sept. 4, 2003, when University of the East shot 60 percent in its 80-69 win, according to our National University.

FEU veteran Aldrech Ramos collected 15 points, seven rebounds and two blocks, while Cameroonian Pipo Ntsessebe posted 11 points and 10 rebounds for the Tamaraws.

"I know that the other teams are focusing their defense on me, so it's good that everyone's scoring," said Garcia, a former NU Bulldogs cager-turned-Tam.

The Tamaraws posted a staggering 60.7 shooting clip in the first half and took a 42-32 advantage, before stretching the gap to as many as 15 points, 56-41, in the third quarter.

But Capacio said the Tamaraws, who will shoot for a first-round sweep against the Tigers on Saturday, need to work on their end game.

"I'm not happy with our finish; we had turnovers down the stretch," said Capacio.

Alex Stephen, who shot a game-high 23 points, toured the Falcons to within 56-51, before the Tamaraws responded with a 14-9 spurt to reach a 72-56 lead.

The scores:
First Game
FEU 79 - Garcia 16, Ramos 15, Mendoza 11, Nunag 10, Ntsessebe 9, Cruzeiro 5, Quinahan 5, Ilagan 5, Cruz 2, Mendoza 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0
ADAMSON 65 - Stephen 23, Calimoso 11, Clemente 8, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0
Quarters: 19-26, 32-42, 56-41, 79-65

Second Game
LA SALLE 81 - Mendoza 16, Dambog 13, Dela Paz 9, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0
UST 53 - Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0, Ayaay 0
Quarters: 19-26, 45-26, 64-39, 81-53

A DRIVING Jaron Lucas is of Adamson charges into FEU's Carl Cruz in yesterday's game. ALYSSA SALURSO

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NCAA co-leader Stags clash with Blazers today

SAN SEBASTIAN goes for its sixth victory and the solo lead against struggling St. Benilde today in the 90th NCAA basketball tournament at the FEGS Flying V Arena in San Juan.

A victory in the 2 p.m. duel with the Blazers will propel the Stags ahead of idle San Sebastian, although San Sebastian coach Aric Aguirre is not taking St. Benilde lightly.

"We're not looking past St. Benilde, despite its record," said Aguirre of the Blazers who now sit 1-2 overall.

"We're prepared for them (Blazers). We know their quickness will give us problems."

Emilio Aguinaldo College goes up against Lyceum at 4 p.m. with the Generals fresh off a 70-51 conquest of the Pirates last Wednesday.

Jan Sebastian Bajarin registers the best use of Calvin Abueva career after the energetic forward flashed superb form with a 16-point, 15-rebound effort in the 72-59 decision over Jose Rizal U last Friday.

"He's been playing with a lot of energy and we hope to feed again on his energy," said Ignacio of Abueva, one of the frontrunners for the Most Valuable Player award.

Stopping Abueva, who leads the league in scoring and rebounding with averages of 16.2 points and 11.4 rebounds, will be the primary concern for St. Benilde, which will bank on floor-bound guards Carlo Lastimosa and Mark de Guzman.

"We're hoping to draw inspiration from our first win," said Edc coach Seneas Isla.

But the Generals are in for a tough outing against the Cardinals, who are also coming off a 66-51 triumph over Letran.

Mark Cruz has proven to be a revelation for the Cardinals, shooting 20 points on five triples in the win over the Knights.

"It would be hard playing a team that is coming off a win," said Lyceum coach Chito Victolero. "We just have to play as hard, if not harder, as we did when we beat Letran."

Gaddyff Rojas

SHAKEY'S V-LEAGUE

SSC, Adamson clobber rivals

By Cedrill P. Tupas

SAN SEBASTIAN vented its ire on National U with an easy 25-15, 25-16, 25-14 win yesterday to solidify its hold of the lead in the Shakey's V-League Season 5 second conference at the FEGS Flying V Arena in San Juan.

Rising by a five-set loss to Adamson last Thursday, the Lady Stags threw the full weight of their talented attack on the Lady Bulldogs to secure their fifth win in six games.

"We learned our lesson to be hard way against Adamson," said JSC coach Roger Gonzaga. "We were able to apply it in this game."

Earlier, Adamson feasted on Ateneo Solaire's scintillating effort as it picked up a second straight win by dumping St. Benilde, 25-23, 25-11, 25-23.

The Lady Falcons vaulted to second place after jacking up their record to 4-2.

Aided by a spate of St. Benilde errors, the Lady Falcons rallied from 15-23 down in the third set to complete the victory in an hour and 14 minutes. Adamson scored the match's final two points on errors.

Serious stepped up in Laboure's absence, finishing with 22 points on eight blocks, while Angela Benting and Ateneo Ramos contributed 10 and 12 points, respectively.

"We never forgot that we were the better team in terms of talent," said Adamson coach Jerry Yee. "That gave us the confidence to continue both in the third set."

San Sebastian showed little mercy, rattling 39 points on attacks to wrap up the victory in just 64 minutes.

Unlike in the loss to Adamson where it was rendered a big load in the second set and allowed the Lady Falcons to rally, San Sebastian proved unrelenting with Thai dagger Jing Bradez and Amelyn Bautista delivering key kills.

"All the teams want to beat us here, as it's up to us to turn our game up a notch," said Gonzaga. "Even a block on Bradez can give the other team hope that they can beat us."

Bradez paced the Lady Stags with 19 points with Bautista and Suzanne Roces posting 13 and 12 markers, respectively.

"We are prepared for them (Blazers). We know their quickness will give us problems."

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Gaddyff Rojas

A QUICK set-up by San Sebastian talon Nicknicl Li's Jaja Santiago (center) sent of the defensive equation at the net in yesterday's match.

Japa Cup: PBA Board cagers trip Solar TV

THE PBA Board Commissioner's Office pumped life into its semifinals bid in the Shemico-Rally Japa Cup basketball tournament Friday, defying to beat Solar TV, 79-75, at the Araneta Coliseum.

Nolo Sabio scored 13 points and Richard Cabarles had seven in the fourth quarter as the PBA Board overcame a 49-56 deficit at the end of the third period and then finished the game on a 9-0 run to pave to the final 3:45 for its first win in the tournament, also sponsored by Asterix Usiki and Coca-Cola.

Sabio finished with a game-high 29 points and Cabarles scattered all of his 13 in the second half as the PBA Board denied Solar TV an outright place in the crossover 19-and-four.

San Miguel Corp. All-Stars already clinched the first spot in the semifinals after sweeping its Group A assignments.

A loss by th PBA Board, meanwhile, will create a three-way tie for second place, which will be broken on quotient, Solar TV said.

Jhay Labinghisa collected 18 points to pace Solar TV, which was outscored, 20-14, in the fourth quarter.

SOLAR TV (79) — Labinghisa 18, Ilustre 15, Dario 11, Magno 10, Gregorio 8, Dabol 7, Bringas 3, Bautista 3, Tumolva 1, Cantos 1, Mendoza 0.

PBA BOARD (75) — Sabio 29, Cabarles 13, Magno 12, Gregorio 8, Dabol 7, Bringas 3, Bautista 3, Tumolva 1, Cantos 1, Mendoza 0.

Quarters: 17-20; 39-36; 49-56; 75-75.

Cycling team one again, but unity still way off

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee yesterday clarified that it has not given recognition to a particular cycling group and urged the two contending factions in the sport to unite for the sake of the sport.

"Since the (two) groups already made efforts in the unification mess (which documented the composition of the country's team to the Asian Games), maybe they can continue and eventually come up with an amicable settlement," said POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. yesterday.

Aside from forging unity, Cojuangco Jr. said any unified cycling body should review its membership, constitution and bylaws, and to register with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

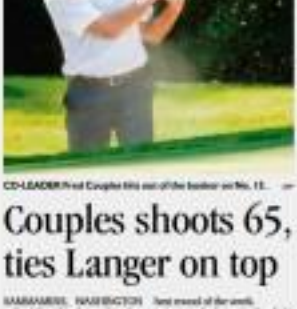
POC spokesperson Joey Romasanta said that the staging of the unification cause was laudable, even though this was just "band-aid" solution to the dispute over which group is the legitimate cycling body.

Cojuangco was earlier quoted as saying that the POC was inclined to recognize Tagaytay Mayor Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino as head of PhilCycling, which espouse the resignation of the incumbent cycling officials en masse, 2012.

But former Philippine Sports Commission chair Philip Ella Juico, who reports said was recently elected president of the other cycling group, announced Friday that he was willing to sit down with Tolentino's group to start unity talks.

Valentino hinted, however, that his group was only willing to work on the formation of a solid team in the Asiad.

"I'm amenable to the unification of athletes for the sake of athletics," Valentino told the barons, "but not the officials [and the new groups], since we are the only FISA and set of officials recognized by the IOC."



CO-LEADER Fred Couples hits out of the bunker on No. 13...

Couples shoots 65, ties Langer on top

SAMMAMISH, WASHINGTON — Fred Couples shot a 5-under par 65 on Saturday for a share of the US Senior Open lead, finding off a one-on-two tournament round hoping the senior season can win his first US golf association championship.

Couples matched Bernhard Langer (66) at 5 under at two-fiend Fabulous Course Club, with Langer birdieing the final hole to pull even with Couples. They are the only two players under par after three rounds.

Couples shot a 4-under 31 on the front nine Saturday, making birdies at Nos. 1, 3, 7 and 9 and bogeying a bunker shot on the sixth to save par. He added a birdie at the 11th to post the best round of the week.

Langer had a streak of 20 holes without a bogey snapped at the 12th, but rebounded with the birdie at No. 13.

And they might have the stage to themselves Sunday.

Couples and Langer were the shots clear of Jay Chiles-more (68) and Tom Kite (68). Gary Sanchez (72), Michael Allen (73), Tommy Armour III (72) and John Cook (72) were 1-over.

A change from the back of the field seems unlikely, considering Couples' 65 is the lowest score of the week.

"If one shoots even par or 1 or 2 under (0) going to be very hard for anyone to get there," Langer said.

AP

Will the Tamaraws make it this year?

THIS COULD be the year when the the Eastern University Tamaraws finally regain the UAAP men's basketball title they last won in 2005.

Headed with an intact lineup, FEU head coach Glenn Capacio seems on the way to getting the league champion's crown in their 2006 title in the 72nd edition of the eight-university varsity league.

Last year, Capacio's green-and-gold Tamaraws finished the eliminations round with an 11-3 record and were an ex-coach for finals with a twice-to-beat advantage.

This even with their big edge, FEU could only finish second to the never-say-die heroes Blue Eagles, who also went to 2006.

This year, though, FEU started strongly by beating Ateneo on the second day of the season.

"For us (to the team, it) would definitely (be) a helluva (if FEU doesn't win the title this time)," Capacio told Abante's downtrodden shortly before the league started.

"It would be a fitting send-off for me as well since that is my last year as Tamaraws head coach. And I hope I can bring the championship back to FEU before I leave."

On his team's upcoming stock, Capacio said: "We can (not) rely on one player to score the needed points. We have about six to eight players who can deliver."

He added that the Tamaraws "have also thoroughly prepared for our opponents' previous matches."

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Mijo

Notable shredder FEU on the court completes team to that year's competition.

Rookie Terrence Romeo, who tallied 21 points in FEU's 94-70 mauling of University of the Philippines' two freshman aces completely caught the UP Maroons off guard. The 5-foot-11 Romeo is first recruited as the Baby Tam who set a points league record by scoring 60 points in a game here ever.

On the other hand, cadet redshirt Jason Ballesteros drilled a game-high 16 points to help the Tams assist out a young line fighting La Salle-Green Archers, 84-80, in double overtime last July 29.

Gilbert Bulilan Cruz, a recruit from Mapua Institute of Technology, and old hand Pipo Hernandez, provided support by scoring 15 and 14 points, respectively.

2012 has a pinoon from some rotation, with Antonio Ramos, the MVP season up last year and 4 graduates, new recruit Mark Olayon and Brandon Brandenburg the Bombo. This, of course, is welcome news to shooters like Cruz, Romeo and JR Cruz-Ong.

Over time, FEU has produced some of the country's outstanding athletes with its well-rounded sports program, the school's spiky athletes left large footprints on international, regional and national tournaments.

Tennis players Felicisimo "Sisit" Amper, Cesar Carbonell and Raymundo Reyes dominated the Asian Junior Davis Cup action. Cesar FEU has shone in amateur boxing, weightlifting, baseball, swimming and athletics.

Table Celestino "Ading" Enriquez in boxing coach, FEU produced featherweight boxer Antonio Villanueva, who gave the country its first silver medal in the Olympics during the 1964 Tokyo Games.

Weightlifting contributor 1952 Helsinki Olympians featherweight Rodrigo del Rosario and middleweight Lucio Rosario (Lucio) finished fifth, respectively, in their divisions.

Swimming produced Asian freestyle queen Heather Cohen-Kaplan and the relentless coach also led by name Gerardo, Clarence and Theresa, and tigger "Pete" and Remedios Lozada.

Track produced two Olympic runners: Nestor Soliman Sotelo, Rodolfo Lapiz, Manuel Mangio and Ernesto Arlandelo.

In athletics, the most popular FEU produces were sprinter Mono Soliman, long jumper Ildefonso Ramos and Lydia de Vega-Mercado, track runner woman in the 1980s.

British Open: Tseng 4 up

SOUTHPORT, ENGLAND — Hot Tseng of Taiwan shot four third consecutive 68 to take a four-stroke lead into the final round of the Women's British Open at Royal Birkdale on Saturday.

Tseng reached the 472-yard, par-5 final hole with only two birdies in her third round and a lead whittled down to two shots after yesterday's Katherine Hull, who carded six to be at 8 under.

Then Tseng unleashed an 8-iron second shot to 20 feet and parred it for an eagle to double her lead at a stroke. She will go into the last round with the same four-stroke lead that she had at the start of the day at 12 under 204.

South Korean Kris In-Kyung (68) rose to third level under.

Amateurs Brittany Lincicome birdied the last two holes and was alone in fourth at 211 after a 71.

Cristie Kerr's bowed 72 put her on 4 under alongside fellow American Christine Kim, Norway's Suzann Pettersen, South Korea's Hee-Kyung Seo and Japan's Momoko Ueda.

AP

Salcedo wrests solo lead in Shell Youth Naga chess

THIRD SEED Nicholeen Salcedo rushed up five straight victories to grab the solo lead in the junior division, while 12-players shared the kiddies spotlight at the start of the Shell Sponsored Youth Active Chess Championship Southern Luzon Leg at SM City Naga's Event Center in Naga City last Saturday.

Salcedo downed No. 6 Ruzzlah Eslanan with the black in the fifth round, capping his solid start in the 10-and-under division.

He earlier beat Reyan Francisco, Sandy Clemente, Khiko Aaron and Gerald Manuevello for five points.

Gino Cabaral led the kiddies division along with Carl Perez, Mary Mae Diego, Michelle Ann Ajil Cuenzaldo, Rafe Mikhael Lozada, Ivan Prado, Gilian Ramirez, Virginia Reaya, Jose Castro, John Mangubat and Jaymen Baje going into the final four rounds of the fourth leg of the national series.

Depleted Smart Gilas may miss Stankovic Cup

By Jane Manera

WITH ONLY 10 available players in its roster, the Smart Gilas Philippine five might skip the coming Fiba-Asia Stankovic Cup.

"There's no final decision yet. If you ask me, I would like to go on competing," said Smart Gilas coach Rajko Toroman. "But we have only 10 players with one import (Jason Ballowe)."

Toroman said co-team owner Greg Slaughter and big man Baloch Al Hassani need to fulfill school commitments while naturalization candidates Marcus Douthit and Filipino-American Andrew Fenequito (Jack Lutz) have yet to secure Philippine passports.

TOROMAN

The Fiba Asia Stankovic Cup features the top-ranked national teams in the continent (China and South Korea), which both bagged off from the Aug. 7 to 13 meet.

Representing the Southeast Asian region, the 8F five is headed by Group B with host Lebanon, defending champion Jordan, Qatar and Syria while Group A includes Kazakhstan, Japan, Chinese Taipei and Iraq.

Toroman admitted that it would be a tall order to match up with these teams without his key frontline players.

"It will be a good tournament before the Asian Games," said Toroman, stressing that the competition in the Stankovic Cup is a preview of the Asiad in Guangzhou, China, on Nov. 12 to 27.

"The field is almost similar to the Asian Games. We just add China and Korea in the tournament," added the Serbian mentor who steered Iran to the 2006 Beijing Olympics after capturing the 2005 Fiba Asia crown.

Smart Gilas manager Freddie Lim said the Samahang Basketbol ng Filipinas will decide this week on the frontcourt reins.

Without Slaughter, the 6-foot-10 Douthit and 6-7 Al-Hassani, Toroman will be forced to rely heavily on the 6-7 Ballesteros, 6-9 Japeth Aguilar and 6-5 Moe Barrios in the low blocks.

Toroman said that if Slaughter and Al-Hassani were available, he would push for the team's participation in the Stankovic Cup.

Unheralded no more

Mazon captures World Series 10-ball crown

By Cordoliff Tupas

SHUT OUT in the local circuit, Jundel "Tantoy" Mazon couldn't have picked a better tournament to redeem his first title.

Finally living up to his potential, the 26-year-old from Manila bagged back from four ranks down to overwhelm Indonesia's Ismal Hamzelou, 10-3, yesterday and rule the 2015 Guinness World Series of Pool 10-Ball Championship before a stunned crowd at the Mall Times draggik in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Given little chance to win because of the illustrious field in the tournament, the shorter-skilled Mazon used near-perfect safeties, precise positioning and superb positional play to nail the crown and the $40,000 top purse.

"This title is very special one only because it is my first foot also because the tournament has so many great players," said Mazon, in a message in the Inquirer enlisted through Philippine Billiard Sabhi manager Christopher Felizo. "This win is for my countrymen, especially people who did not give up on me even when I wasn't winning."

The hometown record was already looking forward to crowning an Indonesian champion when Mazon, who entered Filipino Bernie Alcoan, 8-5, in the quarter-finals, sprinted to a 5-1 lead against Alcoan.

But Mazon, backed by fundamentalist Jonathan Ig, was nine straight racks, a remarkable feat with the alternate break format being applied in the finals.

Mazon befuddled the Asiaseason foes with safeties, eventually leading to open tables that he readily ran out.

"There was a period of big things to come for Mazon, who also came from behind to oust former world champion Dennis Appleton of Great Britain, 8-5, in the semifinals.

Appleton also led 5-3 before Mazon won five straight racks to frustrate the Englishman.

Mazon, relying on a variety of kick shots and rail combinations, reached the hill at 7-1 and finally sealed the win by running out the rack after Appleton missed a routine pot on the pink 4.

On his way to the title, Mazon also beat compatriots Antonio Gabica, 8-5, in the round of 16, before handling and dispatching Singapore's Sheppard Ok, 9-6, in the quarterfinals.

Aside from Alcoan and Appleton, the tough field also included Ralf Sinapore of Germany, Master Sit Boonting of the Kobol Queens and Filipinos stars Lee Van Corteza, Antonio Lining, Antonio Gabica and Dennis Orcollo.

Mazon's purse is actually bigger by $4,000 than the one won by Francisco "Django" Bustamante when he captured the World Heat 9-Ball Championship last month in Doha, Qatar.

JUNDEL Mazon earns his giant-killing ways in the World Series 10-ball pool championship into a $40,000 pay check.

Marquez decisions Diaz to keep belts, calls out Pacman

LAS VEGAS—Juan Manuel Marquez earned a masterful unanimous decision over Juan Diaz on Saturday, picking apart his younger opponent to retain his WBA and WBO lightweight titles.

Marquez improved his record to 56-6 at the Mandalay Bay Events Center with precise punching and slick defense in a rematch that was mostly as entertaining as the fighters' thrilling first meeting, which Marquez won on a ninth-round stoppage in February 2009.

Marquez (51-5-1, 37 KOs) further extend his claim of his now-skilled to be the largest Floyd Mayweather Jr has September by dominating another opponent closer to his own size.

"The first one was difficult, and to win this one," Marquez said. "He's a very good boxer. Like every time Marquez wanted to fight, he's all of our hearts and he'll it all in the ring."

Diaz (35-4) has lost four of his last six fights, yet showed remarkable stamina and courage against one of boxing's most punishing fighters. The University of Houston graduate and aspiring lawyer was dizzy again—just not sharp enough to beat arguably the most accomplished Mexican fighter of his generation.

"I thought the best fight I could," Diaz said. "We were making punches. We fought in, we fought out. I didn't stand in front of him. I followed the game plan, worked off my jab, but he's a great fighter. He was the better man."

Judge Jerry Roth favored Marquez 116-112, while Glenn Trowbridge scored it 116-110 and Patricia Morse Jarman had it 117-111. The boxrecord Press scored 10 rounds for Marquez, 116-110.

Marquez's performance has unfolded a career that now likely surpasses the achievements of Marco Antonio Barrera and Erik Morales, the other two contenders for Mexico's pre-eminence. Marquez is a three-division world champion who could be a significant factor when he moves up to 140 pounds in the coming years, another major player in a loaded weight class.

Marquez answered his call for a third fight with Manny Pacquiao—although the general champion hasn't seemed eager to reprise their first two meetings, which resulted in a draw and a split decision loss for Marquez.

"It's good for all fight fans," Marquez said. "The Mexicans, the Filipinos, everyone wants to see it. That's the most important fight in our eyes."

Pacquiao is in negotiations to fight Australian Hungarian on Nov. 13. Both fighters are represented by Top Rank.

The Las Vegas crowd firmly backed Marquez, the Mexican City native with a humble past in a family that includes his brother, Rafael, who will fight Juan Manuel Lopez in Vegas on Sept. 19 in an attempt to become the first boxing brothers to hold three division titles apiece.

-AP

Dart Tour gets going Aug. 14

THE PROFESSIONAL Dart Tour openings Aug. 14 with cash prizes totaling P125,000, trophies and raffle items up for grabs at The Ambassador Hotel along Mabini Street in Malate, Manila.

The champion pair will get P12,000 with the runner-up and third-placer receiving P6,000 and P2,000, respectively.

Entry fee is P500 per player. Registration is at 6:30 p.m. with the tournament starting at 8:45 p.m.

The event is organized by Calvin Ballesteros and Manuel Ballesteros and supported by Andy and Cory Bautista, Bel Umali, Errol Magbalot and friends of DCD.

Serene Cribb is providing the dart boards.

For more details call 09161846691 or 09178411328.

BIG HIT Hans Flores of NTU-B (right) tackles UTE's Gregrace Jarbe with a big hit en route to a 15-8 points victory in one of the grade school bouts highlighting the start of the 23rd Smart national taekwondo championships Saturday at the Pilipinas Aquino Stadium.

Joson captures Fed amateur kickoff leg

RICHARD JOSON upstaged the favorites with a 36-hole gross score of 151 to win the Open division of the kickoff leg of the Fed Golf National Amateur Series recently at the Palmer course of the Orchard Golf and Country Club in Dasmariñas, Cavite.

Joson, a 5-handicapper playing one of Royal Northwoods, beat top favorite and scratch player John Kiel Abdon by four strokes in the tournament organized by the Federation of Golf Clubs Philippines Inc.

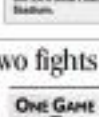
Rookie Mangaldan-born Umali-boro Lucerilla, Kinichi Kiyomura and Jose Alberto Velasco were the other gross winners of the multi-level and age-group competition.

The net champions were TJ Benitez, Arthur Zuniega, Gil Espiritu and Ruben Gamarillo.

Binagnibinan's 132 gross and Benitez's 145 net gave them the Men's Low Qualifier Crowns. Gamarillo (167) and Zuniega (161) topped the Mid-Am Division B play; Kitamura (151) and Espiritu (137) took the top awards in Senior Gun Group I while Arias (166) and Gamarillo (137) emerged as winners in the Senior Gun Group II.

The next leg will be hosted by Riviera on Aug. 24 to 25.

A tale of two fights wanting to happen


ONE GAME AT A TIME

Jay Luzuriaga

BOXERS LALL out the fight they want in either loud or subtle ways.

During the heyday of the heavyweight era, it was not uncommon to see Muhammad Ali yell at the top of his lungs who he wanted to fight next, taunting from wherever Gorgeous George about buying a fight. All under-the-table subscriptions and cameos were necessary while he turned pro.

Sure enough, when the fight happened, the arena would be filled to the rafters and the buzz about an All computer or even setback would last for days. That's why the heavyweight division has been blood of late, with no fighter like Ali who has the boxing savvy and skill to match charisma outside the ring.

Today it's intriguing how Juan Manuel Marquez keeps on angling for a rematch with Manny Pacquiao. Even before Marquez beat Juan Diaz by decision Sunday in Las Vegas, talk among boxing fans understandably moved toward a possible third showdown with Pacquiao. Known as "Dinamita" (Dynamite), Marquez salvaged a draw in the first fight by miraculously fighting back after being floored thrice by Pacman. Then he lost narrowly in a rematch that Marquez felt he won.

Marquez perhaps feels that his career is incomplete if he does not get that third chance against Pacquiao. He even came to the Philippines, dropping by during a fight promotion at the Araneta Coliseum that Pacquiao visited. Marquez played to the media appetite by confronting Pacquiao and demanding a rematch. Pacquiao was the gracious host, nodding quietly and whispering politely to Marquez that he "got lucky" with the win in the second fight.

Let's allow Marquez his pleas while at the same time underwriting Pacquiao's desire to savor in meeting his Mexican counterpart, that one opponent that has given you enough real challenges. But Pacquiao-Bud fighters will have to be Marquez and that's the way the history of this boxing era will show it. Clearly, Marquez is not content with just that.

Pacquiao went through two tough fights with Marquez and it's a value career move to steer away from him. Pacquiao has already beaten him and despite the closeness of the scores of the two bouts, there's really nothing to prove against Marquez. And probably, as some pundits say, there isn't enough box office in a third match as well.

On the other hand, Pacquiao has angled for a fight against Floyd Mayweather Jr. without making a boast, allowing his promoter Bob Arum to run the negotiating table. Sure, there's money to be earned against the undefeated Mayweather and the box-office possibilities are mind-boggling.

But Pacquiao has been the cool dude in this hoopla about a blockbuster that refuses to happen, never deviating from his position that Arum works the contracts and he does the fighting. It's clearly the Filipino in Pacquiao because we can't recall any boisterous or loud Pinoy fighter who seemed an opponent and bellowed like it in public.

Whatever he is, perhaps but it's really not our nature to tell our fist-fighter of magnificence in front of media about wanting a specific fighter. It was probably Evander Holyfield who might want a more decisive if not colorful declaration a la Ali but it's not just our way to yell and badger others about what we want.

Buncio, Watanabe triumph

MARCO BUNCIO of PELED Motor Oil-Banaba and Filipino-Japanese Endel Watanabe shared the limelight as they bagged two wins each in separate bouts recently in the fourth leg of the 2015 Philippine Underbone Ring Championship series at the Clark International Speedway.

The 20-year-old Buncio bagged his fourth straight win in the 150cc Open and his third straight win in the 150cc Open division.

The 15-year-old Watanabe showed marked improvement as he bagged impressive victories in the MTRT 150cc Automatic Masters and in the 125cc Open class up against older and more experienced rivals.

Joining the winners circle was Marvin Mangalindan, who rolled the 115cc Super Stock division against newcomer Adriano Sotto while Jayson Lester Castelo in Buncio bounced back from a third place finish in the Pro-Final of the 150cc Open as he quickly took the lead and outdueled Jaime Bartal going to the finish line. He wrapped up the six-lap race in seven minutes and 30.4389 or just 0.177 of a second ahead of Bartal.

The win fortified Buncio's bid for the Underbone Ring Champion as he now holds a total of 181 points or a six-point lead over Bartal.

World champs grace PSA Forum

TWO PSA Forum will have two former world champions for its special guests in its weekly session hosted tour at Shakey's UN Avenue.

Nonito Donaire Jr., the two-time International Boxing Federation (IBF) flyweight titlist, and ex-world number bright champ Bilmy Pinoza will grace the public sports program good fun over 97.5 Sports Radio 963 unit presented by Dollar Shakey, Pagcor, Shakey's and Asian.

Pinoza will be joined by the members of the national men's team that will compete in the World Men's Championship set Aug. 17 to 23 in Germany.

OUTSTANDING WEEK Mia Piccio finally nails a big one in the US.

Editor Teddyvic S. Pikmodrou
Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Gotoco

SPORTS

Piccio seizes Trans Am title

Overwhelms Argentine in final

FILIPINO HOA Piccio rode an impressive tournament momentum to overpower Agustina Dursiglassi of Argentina, 3 and 2, on Saturday to win the 88th Women's Trans Amateur Championship at The Country Club of Lincoln in Nebraska.

Piccio, who topped the stroke play qualifying and routed her foes in the quarterfinals and semifinals, dominated Dursiglassi with six birdies in the first half of their 36-hole showdown in the morning rounds of the 6-0-up final.

The 18-year-old ICTSI golf scholar from Bacolod hammered her rival from Dursiglassi to win on holes nine, the last on the 23rd hole, when she gunned down another birdie.

"I'm very happy that I finally won a big amateur title here in the United States," said the 120-footed Piccio. "This means so much to me."

Dursiglassi came closest on the 23th hole (No. 9) where she pulled up her three straight birdie and cut the deficit to three holes.

But Piccio made a superb left shot after running the par-3 12th, and then sank a five-foot putt for par that thwarted the Argentine actually.

"That was the championship point for Mia," said coach Bong Lopez. "I had the feeling that hole, she would've been just two holes up and the pressure would've been on her."

Piccio then cruised for her quarterfinal defeat to last week's 18th North and South Amateur Championship in Pinehurst.

"Mia played so well and made so many shots, I just had to do my best with 18 holes to play," said the 22-year old Pampanga.

Piccio, an incoming sophomore at the University of Florida, had lost 27 years to her first 18 holes and had no three-putt in her final 36.

The win avenged fellow Filipino Dottie Ardina's loss to Pamingasi in the quarterfinals and boosted Piccio's bid for a spot in the 80 years-ruing in the Asian Games in Guangzhou.

"I'd like to thank God for this victory," said Piccio, who also expressed her gratitude to ICTSI boss Manny Pangilinan for giving her, and her teammates, all the opportunities to hone their skills through top-notch competitions abroad.

Piccio's victory also came on the heels of ICTSI teammate Bobbi Grisnori's win in the Optimist International Junior Golf Championship where the latter bagged the girls' 14-15 crown at the PGA National Golf and Resort Club in Palm Beach, Florida last week.

Juvic falls short of playoff by 1

PAGSUNGAN 2nd

SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA—Juvic Pagsungan came storming back in the final round with his second 7-under-par 64 of the tournament and missed joining a two-man playoff for the Bintel crown—a triumph—ruing by a stroke Sunday.

The 32-year-old Pagsungan birdied seven of his last 14 holes to match his second-round output and finish with a 11-under 269 total, a shot behind Siddikur of Bangladesh and South Africa's Jbe Kruger, who tied at 268 after 72 holes.

Siddikur lonly one putter later became the first Bangladeshi to win on the Asian Tour after beating Kruger with a par on the first extra hole, the 18th, at the par-71 Empire Hotel and Country Club.

Pagsungan, who blew a top-3 finish in the ICTSI Tour in Del Monte last week, took a solo fifth-place pickup up $16,500 (about P812,000) as he continued his playing in the Queen's Cup in Thailand last June.

After starting with a 70, Pagsungan came up with a 64 spiked by an eagle, seven birdies and two bogeys. They he ended off with a 71 and started the final round four strokes off the pace.

Antonello Mendoza rallied with a 65 and became the next best Filipino at 276, good for a tie for 25th. He earned $3,611.

Mars Pacay tied for 31st with a 69 for 280, worth $2,314. Then came Antonio Lascuna at 285 (71), Gene Bandoc at 286 (71) and Jarrod Mendoza at 286 (72).

Siddikur bogeyed the last hole in regulation play for a 67 to slip into the playoff with Kruger 268.

Jason Friar News

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BUSINESS

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DPWH returns ₱17B in excess funds

Money allocated for 'unnecessary projects'

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE DEPARTMENT of Public Works and Highways has returned to government coffers about P17 billion worth of excess funds it has unearthed from its budget for the year.

Public Works Secretary Rogelio Singson said he discovered some items under this year's department budget that were not really needed. The items were already appropriated but not yet committed or "obligated" for execution.

He said the excess funds already approximated the full-year budget of another government unit, the Department of Transportation and Communications.

"It's with the Department of Budget and Management [now]. DBM told them we don't really need it," Singson said.

Based on the government's 2015 budget, the excess funds accounted for about 13.3 percent of the P135.93 billion new appropriations for the DPWH. Of the amount, P116.76 billion were meant for capital outlays, P6.63 billion for maintenance and other operating expenses and P13.54 billion for personal services.

The new public works chief said he was confident that despite the huge capital outlays needed by his department, spending could be made efficient by identifying and scrapping unnecessary expenditures and by overhauling the process in awarding contracts.

For instance, Singson said the DPWH has been spending so much over the years on the maintenance of substandard roads and bridges. He said contracted projects should be of high quality.

He added that the government has previously been generously allocating funds for so-called farm-to-market roads and it was in these items where most of the excess budget had been unearthed.

Under the new administration, he said the thrust would be to focus on high-quality national roads and bridges, which he said have been mostly neglected over the years.

Singson said he also aimed to overhaul the DPWH organization and put in place a genuinely competitive bidding process for government contracts. He said a lot of legitimate contractors have yet been joining the government's auctions of contracts due to concerns on bid-

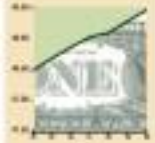
DPWH, B2

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

July 30, 2015

45.540



STOCK MARKET

July 30, 2015

2.4

Stocks seen consolidating this week

THE STOCK market may enter a consolidation phase this week as investors await a further stream of second-quarter local corporate earnings while global concerns on the US economy may temper risk taking.

Last week, the main index Philippine Stock Exchange index rose 0.22 percent to end at 7,429.90.

Paul Joseph Sarmiento, chief executive officer at BPI Investment Management, said that after the previous week's ascend, the market might trade sideways this week.

But he said second quarter corporate earnings results could soon trigger a reversing of local equities due to potential earnings surprises.

Based on the guidance given by most companies, Garcia said second quarter results would not likely disappoint despite the high bar set in the first quarter. Decline spending during the second quarter, he said, would trim consolidated earnings growth.

Security One Goldbank chief strategist Jonathan Ravelas said that short-term, the week's close at 7,429.90 still implied that the market could have some gain so by the 7,450-7,500 levels.

"However, technical indicators suggest that the market

STOCKS, B4

Lopez power subsidiary weighs prospects of using nuclear energy

By Amy R. Remo

AS THE GOVERNMENT revives plans to use nuclear energy, the Lopez-led First Gen Corp. said it was also considering the prospects of nuclear energy development in the country.

In a talk with reporters, First Gen chair Oscar Lopez said it was "too an irresponsible" for the company to consider nuclear power.

"I guess [nuclear energy] would still be clean," Lopez added.

As early as 2007, First Gen already disclosed plans to study the prospects of nuclear energy as an additional investment option for the power generation arsenal. The company, however, said that detailed studies would be needed prior to embarking on such projects.

The Aquino administration has made pronouncements that it would study the possible use of nuclear power to address the country's growing energy requirements. A small group of Filipinos has started training in nuclear technology to prepare them for the government's possible foray in nuclear energy.

"We are doing all the preparations al-

LOPEZ, B2

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San Miguel, Kepco in talks on coal-fed power facilities

Joint venture planned in Mindanao

By Amy R. Borlaza

KOREA ELECTRIC Power Corp. (Kepco) is in talks with diversifying conglomerate San Miguel Corp. on a possible partnership over its planned coal-fired power projects in Mindanao.

According to Kepco Philippines president and chief executive Hak-Full Lee, the company was interested not only in investing in hydropower projects in Mindanao, but also in the proposed mine-mouth coal projects on the island.

"That's why we are talking to San Miguel on a possible partnership. They have the money but they may not have the technology, so Kepco is interested in providing cutting-edge technology," Lee told the business.

"What we want ... is not just coal projects. I met with [San Miguel president] Ramon Ang and I suggested that."

Lee explained in an interview that Kepco preferred to have a partnership wherein it would have shareholdings in a vehicle company rather than acquiring its own coal mines. Under the proposed partnership, San Miguel will retain ownership of the coal mines while Kepco can just upland operate the planned coal-power plants.

Ang earlier disclosed that it bought three coal mines in Mindanao, with resources capable of generating an initial 1,000 megawatts (MW). Aside from Bagumbayan Agro Minerals Inc., which it bought early this year, San Miguel also bought Bonanza Energy Resources Inc. and Dalbati Energy Mining and Development Corp.

The aggressive acquisition of coal mines was meant to further ramp up generating capacities of San Miguel's planned coal-fed plants in Mindanao, which has been experiencing a shortage in supply since the beginning of the year.

"We're in the process of consolidating all the coal mines in the area so that we will be able to know the exact deposit of those coal sites. Once we know the volume, we will put up a mine mouth [power plant]," Ang said earlier.

He said San Miguel was planning to put up a 500-MW mine mouth coal power plant in General Santos City following its acquisition of Daguman's coal mine. A 300-MW facility would need about 750,000 tons of coal a year.

G & W

Lopez power subsidiary weighs prospects of using . . .

From page B1

ready," said Perlas A. Tampin co, president of the state-run National Power Corp.

Tampinco stressed that Malaysia Sung Sue not given formal direction but the various options of using nuclear power had already been discussed.

Energy Secretary Jose Rene D. Almendras explained that aside from energy security nuclear power was also expected to help bring down energy prices in the country in the long run, when oil prices are expected to have gone up.

The energy chief disclosed that a number of local governments have expressed willingness to host a nuclear facility in their respective cities and provinces.

"It's the interest of their economy," said Perlas A. Tampinco, president of the state-run National Power Corp.

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The energy chief disclosed that a number of local governments have expressed willingness to host a nuclear facility in their respective cities and provinces.

"It's the interest of their economy, development and economic growth, they realize they need to find a sustainable source with a non-emissible generating capacity that is applicable to them," Almendras said.

However, Almendras said the Aquino administration has permanently shelved plans to refurbish and operate the mothballed 620-megawatt Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP) because of the political questions and safety concerns surrounding it.

"BNPP is not an option anymore," he stressed.

According to the Department of Energy, the 1,200-600-MW nuclear power plant of the country should be in place by 2025. This is expected to contribute 8.665 million ton oil equivalent (MTOE) to the projected energy mix and reach up to 1.34 MTOE by 2030.

PSE Club Shares

DPWH returns P17B . . .

From page B1

ragging. He said the government could save a lot of money by improving the procurement of road contracts.

In a recent meeting with the Philippine Contractors Association, he said many of the local contractors—who were already doing a lot of big civil engineering projects overseas and a lot of domestic power projects—have committed to join future biddings once the reforms at the DPWH were in place.

He said all these would also have to be accompanied by an overhaul of the DPWH bureaucracy, which currently has 20,000 employees. He vowed to put an end to collusion among DPWH staffers—especially in the provinces—in awarding contracts. Singson said the DPWH has submitted to the national government a rationalization program that would include booting out staffers found out to have engaged in self-dealing activities.

"I didn't agree to a [mass] transfer of people," Singson said. "I'd like to begin from the top."

Cutting corruption in the Philippines is the major campaign battle cry of President Aquino, who underscored this government reform agenda in his State of the Nation Address last week.

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More money, more conditions

THE GOVERNMENT financial institution Guarantee Corp. may be a step closer to controlling the single biggest bad enigma in the country. Or maybe not.

GSC supposedly submitted a higher bid for Asia Migrant Pure Bonds Co. compared to its loser rival, a consortium led by the Gimpsons' Unibob and including the Grumpy Pa. clan group and a few banks, according to an unofficial but fairly reliable grapevine.

But as GSC is an extension of the dominion of the fiscal bunnies, its proposal is riddled with more caveats. And it also clearly wasn't more than just a monetary claim.

And for those betting that Jun Gallinder may be included as a concession to entice the Gokongwei group's cash cow for Pure Bonds, the announcement of a tobacco-land swap had indeed been floated, but long thrashed about by JG Summit chair **Jones** down the early stages of the discussions.

So how much did GSC bid for Pure Bonds? A few billion pesos off the firm's market capitalization, which has surged to dizzying heights over the last few months.

Doris C. Dimilan

Pilot exodus

THE HEADED exodus of PAL Airbus A330/A340 pilots has reached alarming levels, forcing the flag carrier to cancel at least several flights over the past few days. At first, passengers thought it was simply bad weather or maltreatment by foreign-based pilots, but as it turned out, about 12 A320 captains and 13 first officers left in a huff to accept lucrative offers abroad, double or triple their current PAL salaries from various Mideast and Swiss regional carriers. The problem is that these pilots supposedly have binding contracts with PAL and must still serve the carrier millions of pesos in training costs.

The situation may worsen if government agencies like the PCAA and the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines don't chip into the grave concern.

As a stop-gap measure, PAL has reportedly turned to its management pilots (mostly A330 and A340 captains and first officers) to fill the gap, but they, too, need to undergo refresher training to adapt to the much smaller A320.

Since pilots and aircraft mechanics were identified by the government as "mission critical skills," PAL believes that the sudden exodus is illegal. Or here, regulations require that they give their local employers at least 180 days to train replacements.

Of course, management knows that it can do only so much to prevent its workers from seeking greener pastures, but PAL says leaving without a proper turnover is irresponsible, no matter what company you work for.

Jocelyn L. Lazaro

Aquino Broadcasting System

MEMBERS of the media who are lined up in Boni's neck to rush covering the oh-so-vital Malacañang beat are up in arms over the perceived bias of **President Aquino**'s communications team toward ABS-CBN broadcasting Corp.

Just last week, the news on the extension of the term of the non-career government workers broke first over ABS-CBN instead of the government-owned National Broadcasting Network.

Before that, in the first day of the Aquino administration, the Malacañang press corps was made to wait for hours by presidential spokesperson **Edwin Lacierda**, who was at first busy giving an interview to ABC.

It is also no secret that Secretary **Ricky Carandang** of the communications team came from ABS-CBN, although Lacierda took pains to explain that Carandang had nothing to do with the information leak and that the Aquino administration was not favoring any broadcasting company or broadsheet.

Malacañang reporters, however, continue to grumble, prompting many to say that "ABS" should change its name from the original "Alto Broadcasting System" to "Aquino Broadcasting System" and champion the cause of a new kind of "yellow" journalism.

Theo Arcae-Evangelista

MVP for FEU

THE SPONTANEOUS in Manuel V. Pangilinan has a new favorite school.

But MVP is quick to admit that his donations to his alma mater—the doctor de Manila University—continue to this day, despite his recent departure from the school.

In the past, the most prominent way in which Pangilinan showed his support for the school was through his backing of its basketball team's yearly campaign for the University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP) crown. And the partnership has paid off handsomely for Ateneo, clinching several championships in the past few years.

But today, MVP has diverted his resources to the Far Eastern University (FEU), the school which nurtured him with open arms following his departure from the Ateneo board of trustees.

With MVP's support, FEU has so far outmuscled every team in the UAAP, coming off the top spot in the standings with a 5-0 record.

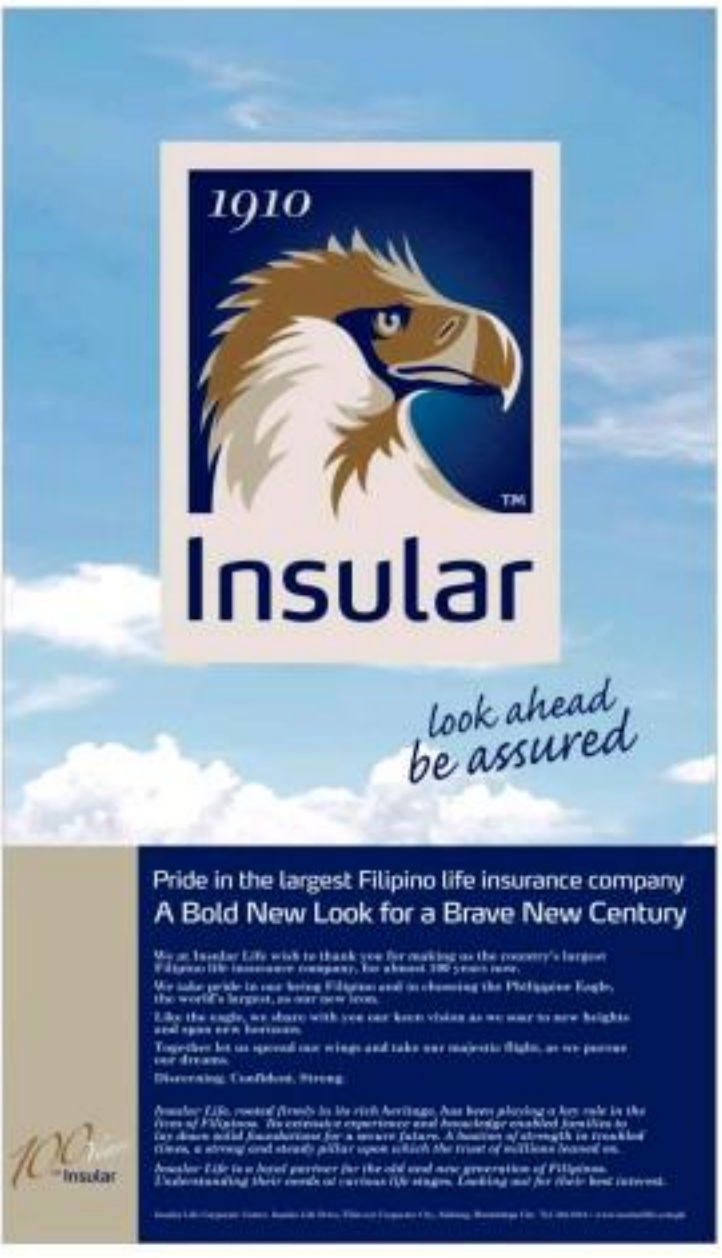
As for Ateneo, which by the way is the current defending champion, it has languished in the cellar with an abysmal 0-5 record. Ouch.

Nicole Hernandez

Brand encroachers

THE NBN incumbent of the rich and famous should take a few lessons in Pinoy-ness, lest they be caught mingling the brand names

BENEDICT



HOW RELATIONSHIPS TRANSLATE INTO SALES

CDO FOODSPHERE'S TECH-FUELED EXPANSION

Leading meat processor CDO Foodsphere uses the same golden secret to remarkable growth since it started as a home enterprise by Lorenzo Ozaeta-Ong in 1971. Today, 39 years later, CDO Kevin Norte, CDO Bibbot Hotdog, CDO Mean Loaf, CDO Hamburger Patties, San Marino, and CDO Holiday Ham are just a few of the brands Filipino families have come to know and love.

One enduring lesson has in keeping a dynamic mindset on the future. Beyond 5-year plans and growth dictates ahead. The future everyone looks to is an increasingly tech-enabled one, especially to a new generation of tech believers sitting at the helm of CDO Foodsphere.

Facing the Giants

To face giant competitors, CDO Foodsphere chose PLDT & SMART Business Solutions to ensure seamless connection and coordination among a growing network of distributors and factories. "Part of our strategy to face giants was to partner with giants such as PLDT & SMART," says CDO Foodsphere's undaunted CDO and Vice President, Francisco Alcuaz.

CDO Foodsphere put itself on extra mile of solutions such as SMART Gold bundled with laptops, units, Mega iPads, Nexus 4 4Mus, Touchlines and DSL.

Alcuaz believes in the philosophy of "building up" genuine relationships with the customer and boosting sales. It is an obvious point easily overlooked. For him, connecting and reaching markets has a deeper value or meaning.

Recently signing a contract for a host of ICT solutions, CDO Foodsphere officials were confident that their faster overall connections would now allow them to better reach their market, smoother internal communications will also ensure faster processes and decision-making.

And so when all is said and done, perhaps software does trump hardware again. The machinery and infrastructure of CDO Foodsphere and PLDT & SMART is in use, depend on the quality of people who inhabit them. And through good times and bad, this will spell the difference in winning market shares and customers.

Surviving the Challenges of 2010, Unfazed.

When asked to review the challenges of the past year and how CDO fared these with the partnership of PLDT & SMART, Francisco Alcuaz highlighted that CDO experienced communication challenges

Francisco Alcuaz is delighted with PLDT and SMART's commitment to clients.

The Convinced, Melvin CDO Foodsphere

Jesus Binongo CDO Foodsphere's MIS Sr. Manager notes that the sheer volume of paperwork will drastically fall with online documentation and shared filing across their network. "With some integrated systems, we can keep track of losses be much better than before."

Fellow MIS Sr. Manager Leonides Tolentino remarks that their sales force is freed from physically reporting to home offices for records transactions, but a few clicks on Wellcom-enabled laptops, accomplishes the tedious instantly. "As we are growing rapidly, PLDT & SMART will continue enabling us through many programs," he said.

Ms. Binongo remarked on PLDT & SMART's own commitment to client service, especially to CDO Foodsphere. "Actually, almost anyone can sell technology, but the level of service and attention we got from PLDT & SMART were simply unmatched," he said.

PLDT SVP and Head of Corporate Business Group Nestor Ramos welcomed CDO Foodsphere's decision to partner with PLDT. "We are honored to partner with a company that innovates and is willing to face the industry giants, and in the process, succeeded and has become a giant among giants as well. PLDT and SMART accept committed to enabling CDO Foodsphere with innovations in technology that will help the company reach yet another level of competitiveness."

SMART Enterprise Business Group VP and Head of Sales and Marketing Joey Hernandez remarked, "We are looking forward to more partnerships with CDO Foodsphere in the days to come."

PLDT AVP & Head of Corporate Capability Management Agustin Tamaki; SMART Wireless Marketing Head Chat Alvia; PLDT VP & Head of SMART Enterprise Business Group Juan Victor Hernandez; PLDT VP & Head of Corporate Relationship Management Renato Corbitello; PLDT SVP & Head of Corporate Business Group Nestor Ramos; CDO Foodsphere CEO & VP Francisco Alcuaz; CDO Foodsphere MIS Senior Manager Jesus Binongo and Leonides Tolentino; PLDT Relationship Manager Alfredo Contreras and PLDT AVP & Head of North Luzon Corporate Relationship Business Dennis Ringlaben.

In 2009, just with the help of PLDT & SMART teams, a plan was hatched to ensure always-on trunk line facilities. Factory store connections were established to provide a reliable and cost-effective means of sending data from stores with remote access for technical support, system updates and backups.

Unique work was also proposed at the PLDT Iloilo to the MIS and Factory Store Sales teams of CDO to enhance their internal communications.

The CDO sales team was also privileged to have a mobile cellular phone and netbook package from SMART. The Molino Bacoor plant was also connected with voice, data and Internet access just in time for its inauguration in June.

During the flooding brought about by typhoon Ondoy, CDO ensured the safety of all its employees and their families. Mobilizing officers and team members, all employees who remained stranded in their respective plants were provided with food, a place to sleep and wait out the wrath of the floods. Fortunately, production facilities were spared in Valenzuela and Bulacan.

RP explores trade deals with US, EU

Easier access to foreign markets

By Abigail L. Ho

THE GOVERNMENT is exploring the possibility of forging a bilateral trade agreement with the United States, the Philippines' second biggest trading partner.

Ramon Reinoso, assistant trade secretary and director of the Bureau of International Trade Relations, said that Trade Secretary Gregory Domingo would be spearheading to the United States soon to pave the way for President Aquino's state visit next month.

"President Aquino will be flying to the US in September to explore an engagement with [Washington], whether a bilateral or a choice free trade agreement," he said in a speech at the 18th Metro Manila Business Conference last Friday.

Domingo earlier mentioned the country's interest in participating in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a multilateral free trade deal that involved several economies, including the United States.

"You have to be part of every trade agreement because to be excluded is a disadvantage. So you, We're not yet part of [the TPP], but at some point, I think it is our desire to join as well," he said.

Apart from the United States, current participants in the TPP included Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam.

Reinoso said the Philippines was also looking at the possibility of signing a free trade pact with the European Union.

After almost two years of negotiations, the Partnership Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between the Philippines and the EU was initialed in Brussels last June 25.

While the PCA was not equivalent to an FTA between the country and the economic bloc, it could facilitate the eventual drafting of an FTA as it provided the legal basis for cooperation between the two parties in various political and economic sectors.

"We want to promote more [US and EU] markets. Of course, they'll also penetrate ours, but a balance is something that we'll have to achieve. It will all depend on how well we organize and develop an infrastructure to pursue these agreements," Reinoso said.

He cited the benefit that the country has attained ranging from the implementation of other FTAs, including the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement, the Asean-Australia-New Zealand FTA, the Asean-Korea FTA and the Asean Trade in Goods Agreement.

Local businessmen, he said, were now enjoying easier access to those markets.

Stocks seen consolidating this week

From page B1

may be ripe for a near-term correction possibly toward the 3,388-3,258 levels initially. Supporting this presentation is the lackof volume and waning momentum," Revilla said.

Jesse Ybiel Jones' market salesman on Friday on disappointing second quarter US gross domestic product data spooked investors. The Dow Jones Industrial Index was marginally down while the broader S&P500 and technology-heavy Nasdaq were both marginally up.

It was reported that the US economy grew 2.4 percent year-on-year in the second quarter, slightly below the market consensus of already 2.5 percent and likewise slower than the revised first quarter growth of 3.7 percent.

Boris C. Bershan

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BUSINESS

Vehicle traders seek recall of 'midnight' EO

Aberdeen upbeat on RP stock market

By Doris C. Dumlao

GLOBAL ASSET management group Aberdeen is optimistic on the prospects of the stock market in the Philippines and the rest of Southeast Asia, noting that robust domestic consumption presents a compelling investment case for the region.

Singapore-based Andrew Lilien, senior investment manager at Aberdeen Asset Management Ltd., said in a briefing that growth in Asia was expected to outpace that of the West and that the outlook for corporate profit growth was positive.

Despite better fundamentals, however, he noted that Asian markets were still trading. Plateau markets, suggesting that the upside potential should be greater.

Key weaknesses Asian markets should be viewed as an excellent buying opportunity," Lilien said.

The Philippines is among the markets where the asset management group is "overweight" in. This means Aberdeen's actual investment in the local stock market is bigger than its benchmark allotment.

About 2 percent of its Asian emerging market portfolio is now directed in the Philippines, higher than its 0.5 percent benchmark.

Aberdeen's portfolio in the Philippines includes Ayala Land Inc., Bank of the Philippine Islands, JollibeeFoods Corp., Selim Terminals Inc. and Cebu Holdings Inc.

"We like well-run companies with strong balance sheets. Country of listing is irrelevant—what matters is to avoid the bad companies and are to overpay for growth," Gillen said.

Also, Aberdeen prefers India to China because of its higher levels of corporate transparency, respect for minority shareholders and wider set opportunities.

ASEAN Equity Asset Management recently launched a local fund which has a significant investment in Aberdeen's funds.

Other viral opportunities in the Philippines and the rest of Asia, the locally registered fund called "The AsiaPac Recovery Fund" can provide local investors an opportunity to diversify into Asia, said ATR Kimeng.

Management portfolio manager for international equities Julius Tamdagan.

Creation of auto industry 'super body' worries Avid

By Dexter L. Lacuz

THE ALLIANCE of Vehicle Importers and Dealers (Avid) reiterated its opposition to an alleged "midnight" executive order that is being drafted by the Arroyo administration allowing local car assemblers to import more vehicles than they export.

In a statement, Avid said such a move could spell "life or death" for the auto trading industry.

According to the group, some local assemblers "have shown their true colors" by calling for one of their main goals—the rough Executive Order No. 877-A, or to change the tariff structure of imported vehicles.

"It's becoming clear that the real intention of EO 877-A is not only to provide, yet again, a set of protective incentives to local car assemblers (the EO is primarily designed to create the Motor Vehicle Development Council)—a 'super body' that would review and recommend raising tariffs than could protect imported vehicles out the market," Avid said in the statement.

Avid is made up of some of the country's largest vehicle traders such as Hyundai Asia Resources Inc., CARS Motors Inc., The Covenant Car Co. Inc., Asian Carmakers, United Asia Automotive Group, PGA Cars, Nissan Total Inc., Batinik United Automobiles Inc. and Volvo.

It was formed to save their industry from "possible extinction," the group said.

Apart from the Arroyo administration's "hasty" approval of EO 877-A, the group lamented that their continuing non-inclusion in the crafting of its implementing rules "doesn't speak well of the promised transparency under the new administration."

Avid said there would have been no debate if the proposed Motor Vehicle Development Council envisioned by EO 877-A was only aimed at laying down the roadmap for the successful local car assemblers.

"But many part of the 'super body's proposed mandate is to tailor with-width of its competitors' products, it becomes an issue that we—an affected parties—should have a say," it stressed.

Earlier, the group called on President Arroyo and Trade Secretary Gregory Domingo to scrutinize EO, which was signed in the last days of the outgoing Arroyo administration. In seeking to recall, the group said the EO was crafted with haste, lacked public consultation and had a flawed publication.

Contrary to claims by local assemblers, Avid said its members were not seeking any incentives.

"It's funny that some unnamed sources from the local car assemblers industry are accusing that our traders are not entitled to perks reserved only for car assemblers," the group's statement said. "In the first place, we never assumed that we are, nor did we ask for such incentives. We only want to compete on a level playing field."

Union Bank first-semester profit hits P2.22B

By Doris C. Dumlao

ABOITIZ-LED UNION Bank of the Philippines said its net profit in the first semester fell 37.22 billion, up by 1 percent from year-ago level.

In an interview with the bigwigs, Union Bank president Victor Siddayao said the bank's January to June net earnings were supported by the robust growth in its lending portfolio, particularly in the consumer segment.

"There was a robust growth in housing and auto loans and a modest growth in credit cards," Siddayao said.

Based on the bank's financial statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on Friday, Union Bank booked a six-month interest income of about P6 billion, or almost the same as the year-ago level.

Other income such as those derived from fee-based services and trading gains dipped. The bank generated P747 million in trading gains versus P1 billion a year ago, while fee-based earnings eased to P521 million from P558 million.

On the expenditure side, Union Bank pared down its six-month net interest expense by 20 percent to P2.5 billion from a year ago, as the low interest rate regime led an improved funding mix kept cost of money low.

Loan loss provisioning slowed to P511.68 million from P706 million in the same period last year.

BUSINESS Monday Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Rupisan

Revenue reform takes top priority

By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor

WHAT IS the single biggest factor that will drive success or failure in fighting Philippine poverty? It is the issue of public revenues.

If funding is scarce, investment will not come because of the lack of infrastructure. Students will not get enough classrooms, the sick will get substandard health care, slums will continue to burn. There is a rising consensus among economists that the revenue problem is the prime "binding constraint" of the Philippine economy.

President Benigno Aquino III recognizes the importance of fixing revenue.

He stated in his inaugural speech, as translated, "We will strengthen collections by the Bureau of Internal Revenue and we will fight corruption in the Bureau of Customs in order to fund our objectives for the public welfare."

I will argue here that Congress is a crucial partner in this drive. The following data are taken from the Department of Finance and reports of my former fiscal team at the National Planning and Policy Staff.

Fiscal crisis, reform, then backsliding

Tax effort, or taxes collected as a percent of gross domestic product (GDP), used to be a high 16 percent before the Asian crisis. From there on, tax collection took a precipitous hit. There was substantial tax evasion especially among professionals, taxes on cigarettes and alcohol products were not adjusted to inflation, the VAT law was not implemented well, and there were too many incentives given away.

With revenues slowing and the deficit swelling, the national government's total debt in 2004 tripled the 1996 figure. Hence, a strong share of the budget went to interest payments, drying up funds for infrastructure and social protection.

That's why the government mounted fiscal reform in 2005 and Congress passed important laws. Prominent among these were the Sin/Excise/Value Added Tax law (RA 9337). There was also the Lateral Attrition law (RA 9335) which drew up contracts and tasks for the revenue agencies. And RA 9334 amended the rates on "sin products," or those derived from alcohol and tobacco.

These resulted in some recovery. Tax effort, which had fallen to 12.4 percent in 2004, rose to 14 percent from 2006 to 2008. The national government's debt stock fell from 70 percent of GDP in 2004 to 50 percent in 2007.

But alas, new laws were passed that caused the government to lose money again. And soon, the reformed VAT law reduced the inflow from companies—the corporate tax rate was to be cut to 30 percent in 2009, from the previous 35 percent.

According to the Department of Finance, the foregone revenue from all the new laws was some P 81 to P 96 billion per year. The new laws in effect negated the gains from the reformed VAT. Taxes were back again at the low levels before the wave of reforms.

Urgent steps for public finance

What is to be done then to stop the bleeding? How can the state collect enough funds to pay for much-needed infrastructure and pro-poor projects? Reforms in running the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs are necessary, but they are not sufficient. Congress is a key player.

First of all, legislators must not pass more laws that will further erode revenues. Congress must review the bills in the pipeline and strike away the pseudo provisions that will net more revenues.

Then pass the bill installing the Simplified Net Income Taxation System (Sinet). Self-employed professionals like dentists, doctors and lawyers tend to cheat on their taxes by overstating their deductions for business expenses. The Sinet reduces the occupations for these tasks and will provide for the liquidity-constrained P 1.24 billion every year.

Rationalize fiscal incentives. Current tax breaks for investors tend to overlap and some of them are obsolete. They lack focus and tend to duplicate each other. According to the DOF, the old Senate version of the Rationalization of Fiscal Incentives bill (SB 3126) will save the country P 10 billion per year.

Reintroduce the limit on "sin products." According to the World Bank, the high excise tax rates in the Philippines are among the lowest in the region. It is thus not surprising that the country is among the largest cigarette consumers in the region. Note however that further rates on such sin products are socially acceptable. A survey of Social Weather Stations finds that 82 percent of the people favor more cigarette taxation. (There is a proposal from professors of the UP School of Economics to raise the VAT rate, but that deserves a separate article.)

Raise the taxes on all products. It is not obvious, but this controversial move is actually pro-poor or progressive. Poor consumption rises the higher one's income rises. Food taxes are almost as progressive as income taxes, and they are more progressive than the VAT. Indonesia hiked its fuel taxes and announced that the proceeds would be given to the poor as conditional cash transfers. The package worked and was politically acceptable—the President there was just burned by the same but got re-elected.

Send comments to arroyo.dennis@gmail.com.

PHOTO: Aquino declares in his State of the Nation Address that the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Customs will step up collection efforts.

It's not just about IQ

By Trina J. Pineda, Lawyer Hannette B. Cuaco and Ronie I. Ortega
Contributor

WORKPLACE WISDOM

PLACATING IRATE clients, dealing with unreasonable requests, having to work with others you don't feel like it—all of these are part and parcel of delivering good customer service, particularly in the hospitality industry.

Unlike other industries that have specific guidelines, in the hospitality industry, service IS the product.

Hence, how workers look, behave and interact with customers determine the quality of the service, but because people are not robots, the quality of a service may vary—from person to person, from hour to hour.

Emotional intelligence is defined as the person's ability to accurately perceive, use, understand and manage their own as well as others' emotions.

With the stresses of dealing with a variety of situations and customers, service workers are expected to possess the ability to manage other people's emotions, as well as their own reactions and emotions.

The Ateneo Center for Organization Research and Development carried out a study to look into how IQ (intellectual quotient) and EQ (emotional quotient) relate to job performance in service industries. A total of 71 hotel and resort service professionals participated in the study.

EQ vs IQ

The study shows that in the hospitality industry, it is EQ more than IQ that affects job performance. Results also showed that people in customer-facing positions such as waiters, front office personnel and room attendants who come into contact with more clients have considerably higher EQ scores compared with back-of-the-house staff.

Suggestions

Given the importance of EQ in the hospitality industry, how can leaders and organizations harness their power?

Here are some suggestions:

Consider EQ in selecting front-liners. For jobs where dealing with people is inevitable, EQ should be considered in employee selection. This does not mean that we do away with IQ and experience. Especially for service professions, where there is already an understanding of the requirements of the job and those had already been tested hands-on experience, EQ can make the difference between a good service worker and a great one.

Include EQ in promoting and selecting leaders. Among leaders, emotional intelligence may be just as important as traditional hard skills.

Leadership entails being able to lead a group to work together harmoniously. Considering that different people have different attitudes and traits, it takes a great amount of "people skills" to be able to lead a group toward attainment of a goal.

The effectiveness of a leader is gauged by his ability to unite a diverse group of people help reach results. The more effective the leadership skills, the better the group will be able to work together. It is the skill of the leader that will transform self-interested workers into a team that seeks the welfare of the group.

Good leaders need to have a good understanding of their own reactions as well as those of others, and must be able to regulate their own emotions when interacting with others. Thus, in promoting good performers to managerial positions, EQ is an important factor to be considered.

Developing emotional intelligence. Although there are some people who have higher EQ than others, it is not necessarily innate. Emotional intelligence can be developed by teaching people how to identify issues and take responsibility for their emotions. People can also be trained to be sensitive to and manage other's emotional reactions.

Lots of practice

Unlike intelligence or other personality traits, the good news is that EQ is not necessarily a gift that some people have and others do not. Although it may come easier for others, it can be developed. Similar to learning something new, developing EQ will just take patience and lots of practice. (*Trina and Ronie are graduates of the M.A. in Psychology Program of Ateneo de Manila University. Gwen is a faculty member of the Department of Psychology, ADMU. This article is an abridged version of a study featured in the Ateneo CORD's book, Leading Philippine Organizations in a Changing World (Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2014). For feedback about this article, please email ateneocord@ateneo.edu.ph*)

Make your life a project

DEAR MEYRIN,

Your mother asked me to write you a Palanca for your retreat, a requirement (in your opinion) to enter your sacrilege.

Some take retreats only because they are required to. Others look for entertainment in them, as in watching movies.

One starts a retreat with any motivation, but the motivation can advance or regress. It is up to him. Retreats are like life.

We start with givens—family, friends, wealth, education, talents, etc.

Some of us turn the givens around and become better persons, while others just can't break out from their beginnings and end up still in the starting line.

Perhaps, in this retreat, the following life questions have occurred to you:

Are you happy with your beginnings? Or do you blame them as obstacles to what you desire?

Do you find meaning in what you do? Or, do you say, "Why am I in this silver ships that are rarely sailing?"

Here is the question, "How would you like your children and friends to describe you as you go?"

As an engineering student, you know engineers find their meaning in doing projects—construction projects, research projects, etc.

Truly, projects are their life. What misfortune it would be for a man who took up engineering to end up a lawyer without having been involved in a project!

The word 'project' comes from the Latin word, *projectum*, meaning "something thrown forwards".

As such, a project is the act of throwing something out there somewhere in and advancing. Its words to others it is. The man with a project is aiming at his goal and pursues it to completion.

At the end of the project, he may say, "Like what I built and I hope others like it, too."

After one project, he gets involved in another and repeats the cycle to an endless series of creation and wonder. "I hope others like it, too."

Make your life a project and practice engineering.

You have beginnings. You must finish them.

Be thankful that you have something to start with and that your family supports you and loves you, even if you may see appearance is sometimes.

Of course, the people close to you are not perfect. But that is precisely why you have a PhD-JECT and you are an engineer making do with the little that you have.

Here is a tip I learned from my life, something to do with the heart.

I cannot succeed without gratitude and kindness in my heart for those imperfect people who brought me up and carried me to the end of my twenties.

Who am they? Your Lolo and Lola, your parents, my friends, my teachers, my friends, my peers—people who, by their example or lack of example, have shown me the way.

Here is another tip. I cannot succeed if I only think about what I feel and how I feel—me, my mine!

Think about Bill Gates. If he had only thought about "me, my mine", he would never have crossed the border and served the needs of other people and provided answers to their problems.

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Aurelio O. Angeles

When he built up Microsoft, he was responding not to his personal needs. He was searching and giving solutions to the problems of others. In the end, those people whom he serves give him his profits. He cannot borrow reason as his tool.

That would be like an inventor of a wonderous washing machine that could wash, dry and iron clothes out of thin air, but can only do this for his clothes and not on one else's. In the end, no one bought his washing machine.

Believe it or not, your Uncle Boy runs his business with the end of providing service to other people and it is the source of our growth and the reason why our people wish us well.

Our people and I believe in this: The purpose of doing business is to serve other people better, faster and at less cost—not to make money and amass wealth.

Where does profit come in? Profit is just the result or fruit of service.

Profit is not the end of business. It is just the product of good service to customers. People get wealthy because they have served well.

Here is another tip.

You all do your I-Test! I am on top of the world. Sometimes, it can get depressing. Often, this one feeling comes and goes in an instant. But there are times when it stays with me for days, even weeks.

You know, I may no lesson I have an author when the exams gets tough. And my anchor to inspire those the storm. It is not me that is strong. That will be for us.

When the storm passes, I move on. And I have my rudder to keep me on course and my motor at speed. I am not that sudden or that serious. That would be less sin. My sudden and my motor are outside of me, greater than the waves and winds of the sea.

That's my secret. If you want to know more about this secret, let's talk about it anytime. After all, you are my sister's son.

But you will protest, "Why, that is our engineering!" Perhaps.

People are not machines that come in standards, engineers make use of lubricants to keep them in motion. There is another thing engineers make plenty use of—sin.

We do not use sin, but it gets the machine in good operating condition. And it is free!

Stay limited analogy but I think it brings the message across that it is not just men, holes and wheels that keep things going in a machine.

I have to end and it is good to end with the beginning.

Make this retreat a project that will bring benefit not just for you but for people around you, starting with your mother, father and brothers. Your givens.

Make your life a project and practice good, old engineering. There are so many projects out there that one can do. Wants and be determined to succeed.

To succeed, you have got to beat other guys in the market who may have been born with more cash and holds and wheels than you.

How? By having a greater heart, a more reliable motive and rudder!

TITO BEE

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and not the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The writer is an entrepreneur, and author of the books "The Abc Exchange Rate: Why Are We Poor?" and "The Philippine Economy: Do Our Leaders Have A Clue?" Feedback at map@philippinelines.com.ph. For previous articles, please visit map.org.ph.)

FPI seeks greater participation in gov't

By Abigail L. Ho

THE INTERIM CEO of Philippine Inclusive has assured commissioners from the Department of Trade and Industry and of Justice to disconcurrence with industry stakeholders before coming out with policy statements and to facilitate the prosecution of smuggling cases.

In a statement, the group said that during its meeting with Trade Secretary Gregory Domingo last week, it was agreed that policy to-most would be thoroughly studied and discussed with stakeholders before being implemented.

FPI earlier hit framings for making policy pronouncements concerning the smuggling and release of import commodity clearance (ICC) certificates, release of yet-to-be-inspected imported goods under provisional approvals, and trimming of the list of products that had to go through rigid tests before being granted market access.

"The ICC is meant to protect the safety of our people. It is quite absurd that the secretary

need a job?

Investment Funds of Cocolife Life Insurance Company	Valuation Date: 7/30/15	Valuation Date: 7/31/15
PFI-AC Dollar Bond Fund	1.0575	1.0575
PFI-AC Global Bond Fund	1.1848	1.1847
PFI-AC Peso Fixed Income Fund	1.3454	1.3454
PFI-AC Peso Equity Fund	1.4480	1.4497
PFI-AC Balanced Fund	1.0980	1.0971
Principal Protect 1	0.9914	0.9914
Principal Protect 2	1.0088	1.0088
Principal Protect 3	0.9650	0.9650
Peakwood Yield Protect	1.1330	1.1330

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

AyalaLand

Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) announces its shift to the GLOBE MANAGED IP-PBX SOLUTION for all telephone lines at its headquarters at Tower One and Exchange Plaza, Ayala Triangle, Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

This applies to ALI offices located at the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 28th, 29th, 30th, and 31st floors of the building.

Our new TRUNK LINE is

908-3000

If you know the local number of the person you wish to contact, simply replace the first 4 digits (8413) of the old number with 9083 and retain the last 3 digits.

PSBank
PHILIPPINE SAVINGS BANK
Metrobank Group

BALANCE SHEET

(Head Office and Branches)
As of June 30, 2010

ASSETS	AMOUNT
Cash and Cash Items	
Due from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas	
Due from Other Banks	
Held-for-Trading	
Available-for-Sale Financial Assets	
Held-to-Maturity (HTM) Financial Assets	
Loans and Receivables (net of unearned discounts and allowance for losses)	
Investments in Non-Marketable Equity Securities (net)	
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (net)	
Real and Other Properties Acquired (net)	
Sales Contract Receivables	
Investment in Associates - Equity Method	
Investment in Subsidiaries - Equity Method	
Deferred Income Tax Asset (net)	
Goodwill	
Other Assets	
TOTAL ASSETS	

LIABILITIES	
Financial Liabilities at Fair Value through P/(L) in I/E	
Deposit Liabilities	
Due to Other Banks	
Bills Payable	
a) BSP Rediscounting and Other Advances	
b) Interbank Loans Payable	
c) Other Deposit Substitutes	
d) Others	
Bonds Payable (net)	
Unsecured Subordinated Debt (net)	
Deferred Income Tax Liability (net)	
Deferred Tax Credits	
Income Pledged for Trust Liabilities	
Other Liabilities	
TOTAL LIABILITIES	

STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY	
Capital Stock	
Other Capital Accounts	
Retained Earnings	
Treasury Stock	
TOTAL STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY	
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY	

CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	
Guarantees Issued	
Financial Standby Letters of Credit	
Commercial Letters of Credit	
Trust Department Accounts	
Unused Credit Lines	
Spot Foreign Exchange Contracts	
Securities Held Under Custodianship by Head Office	
Trust Department Accounts	
a) Trust and Agency Accounts	
b) Investment Management Accounts (IMA)	
c) Other Fiduciary Accounts	
Derivatives	
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Investment with Bangko Sentral	
a) Net Interbank Borrowings	
b) Net Repurchase Agreements	
Non-Performing Loans (NPLs)	
Ratio of Non-Performing Loans to Total Loan Portfolio (NPL to TLP)	
Interbank Loans Receivable	
Reserves against Non-Performing Loans	
Deposit Liabilities of Head Office	
Deposit Liabilities of Branches	
Deposit Liabilities of Foreign Currency Deposit Units	
Gross Income (GI)	
Trading and Investment Securities Gains (Losses)	
Foreign Exchange Gains (Losses)	
Net Income (NI)	
Ratio of Gross Income to Total Assets	
Ratio of Net Income to Total Assets	
Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR)	
a) Tier 1 Capital	
b) Total Qualifying Capital	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
) S.S.

Before me, a Notary Public for and in the City of Makati, this ____ day of ____ 2010 personally appeared the following persons who executed the foregoing instrument and acknowledged before me that the same is their free and voluntary act and deed:

Name	Competent Evidence of Identity

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL on the date and place above written.

Doc. No. ____
Book No. ____
Page No. ____
Series of 2010

IFC eyes stake in EDC international holding firm

Lopez company explores prospects in Chile, Indonesia, US

By Aloy N. Reyes

INTERNATIONAL FINANCE Corp., a unit of the World Bank that provides development loans to the private sector, is exploring the possibility of investing in the proposed international holding firm of Energy Development Corp. (EDC).

EDC is looking to establish a presence in countries such as Indonesia, Chile and the United States and the proposed holding firm will handle overseas operations.

EDC president Richard B. Tantoco said, however, that taking an equity position in the holding company was just one of the options that IFC is studying.

"There are a lot of options (for the international holding firm). But we go by economics so we're not just there to collect, but then it will take time. Of course, we're also studying all the angles on taxes," Tantoco added.

Another option is for the IFC to just provide loans.

The outlet said it was open to increasing its interest in EDC to support its power projects, which are expected to require over $1 billion over the next five years.

EDC is best on going overseas, as it is accruing the prefinal ownership limit of 25 percent of the country's total generating capacity.

"We're working hard abroad but unless we have something signed, I'd rather not say much. But we're pushing (our planned international projects) right now. Hopefully, in the next quarter, we'll have something," Tantoco said.

According to Tantoco, the company was looking for partners in the countries where it plans to establish operations.

The Lopez-led firm was earlier inclined to bid for prospective drilling projects in Kenya.

The geothermal company also has a drilling contract with Liberty Gold Ltd. (LGL) of Papua New Guinea, which is among the world's top gold producers in the region.

Since 1999, these drilling contracts with LGL have been a major source of revenues for the Lopez-led firm.

DEADLINE TODAY

SSS amnesty program yields ₱502M

By Batocal W. Dumalaga

THE SOCIAL Security System has collected a total of P502.35 million in overdue employers' contributions from an amnesty program that ends today.

SSS officer in charge Monesan Trinidad said in a statement that 8,649 employers availed themselves of the amnesty program.

"This is the last chance for delinquent employers to avoid paying penalties," Trinidad said.

"There will be no extension after Aug. 2 because this law can destroy penalties on existing SSS premiums only provides for a six-month installment period," he added.

The program was supposed to have ended on Saturday, July 31, but the SSS gave the go-ahead for an extension to make the last day a regular weekday.

Transfer and payments from the National Capital Region (NCR) amounted to P379.86 million or 76 percent of the total.

"Almost 60 percent or 5,566 of employers who availed themselves of amnesty were from NCR," he said. "Next, 1,310 are from Luzon and 917 from Visayas and Mindanao."

Trinidad said employers who failed to remit the contributions face criminal charges and imprisonment of six to 12 years.

Aside from that, delinquent employers must pay a P20,000 fine and a monthly penalty of 3 percent of the unremitted premium.

Based on the Social Security Act of 1997, employers are required to remit contributions to SSS on or before the 10th day of the following month.

However, errant employers were given a chance to complete payments through the Social Security Law that took effect last Feb. 1.

The new law allows employers to settle their obligations without having to pay accumulating penalties.

Under the condonation law, employers who pay their delinquencies in full or submit to an installment payment proposal within the availment period will have all their penalties condoned.

Concurrent to the condonation of unpaid contributions is the amnesty program for employees who failed to remit the accumulations on their employees' behalf.

SSS data show that its members who are employed make up 85 percent of the 4.6 million such delinquent short-term loan accounts.

These accounts include loans related to salary, calamity, emergency educational, study now pay later, vacational/sickness, UIR, stock investment and privatization fund loans.

Stocks seen flirting with record highs

By Doris C. Dumlao

THERE IS a very real possibility that stock prices will hit close to record highs this year due to favorable economic fundamentals and the change in administration, according to leading online brokerage Citiseconline.

Chief technical analyst Annie Sarmiento said in a recent briefing that the main share Philippine Stock Exchange index may reach 5,000 to 5,600 this year, although he also sees a major pullback in the second half.

Citiseconline president Gerardo Ruiz added that there was a chance that the index may breach the record 5,000-level last seen in 2007, if the new administration shows that it can fulfill the promises made during the campaign.

"If the new administration can get on with business from the voting agenda that it's doing the right thing, then will also lead to a re-rating by investors," Ruiz explained.

April Lee Tan, Citiseconline head of research, meanwhile, said there were many sectors moving generally, which should translate to higher stock prices.

"The Philippine economy is well positioned for growth with rising gross national product per capita attributed to the strong growth in overseas Filipino workers remittances and the business process outsourcing industry. Investments in infrastructure projects by the government expected to further establish," said Tan.

She added that the Philippines should benefit from the stimulus given the projected inflows of Overseas Filipinos.

Improvement in governance and implementation of economic reforms will boost investor confidence. This could act as the catalyst for the market's growth. By patrolling the country's fiscal deficit, setting firm revenue and agency targets and spearheading the qualified people to the different departments, the government is putting up for a positive investment climate for all investors," Tan said.

For the rest of the year, Citiseconline is focusing on growth, rather than value.

"Growth will outperform given the diminishing uncertainty about the economic recovery," Ruiz said.

Citiseconline's stock picks include companies seen directly benefiting from higher consumer and investment spending such as Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co., Security Bank, Megaworld Corp., Filinvest Land Inc., Ayala Land Inc., Robinsons Land Corp., Manila Water Co., DMCI Holdings and International Container Terminal Services Inc.

But Citiseconline officials acknowledged that concerns over the economic slowdown in the United States and the fiscal crisis in Europe could dampen investment appetite.

"Global markets will continue to react under consolidation ranges as a result of the 14-month recovery rally since March 2009. We, however, do not expect a double-digit correction but we can witness partial recovery pullbacks," Sarmiento said.

Biz Buzz

Previous page B1

of the oil-as-expensive bugs that are only too happy to spread on.

In the country's belt in the middle of the pork tallage, for example, two suspected stowaways were napping near the right nose in possession "Hershey," Did it mind. French bread known for its moist-have Bolsin bags that can rest as much as a brand new table cloth.

$5/GBP-tars, says one. No, says the office with an air of final author by it's DMS. Incase the Asian loan pronounced that was for the second, it's 18 mos. Don't pronounce for it.

And so they went on advising their HUGE bags, causing some of the members of the "also-attended" who overheard them scrambling convention at the clubhouse to almost choke on their mouthfuls of chick-in mole.

Tino Arao-Dumlao

Dinosaur-age reporting

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange, recently slapped by the Securities and Exchange Commission with a P500,000 fine for not submitting written reports about certain disciplinary actions taken against its now-erstwhile, has proposed an electronic data-sharing link-up with the corporate watchdog. The PSE contends that the submission of such disclosure requirement is for the investing public to be aware of what's happening. Once posted on its website, the half-million brokers public, the PSE believes.

But the SEC says that the reportorial requirement is in the law and the PSE had been complying with those requirements until it became employed in certain years.

As such, the SEC will still have to decide whether the Jollibee Bulletin proposed to is acceptable. Otherwise, everything have to diligently submitted in black-and-white and stamped with the "received" acknowledgment by the corporate watchdog.

Boots C. Dumlao

The anti-trust riddle

AMONG the items that raised some controversy during PNoy's State of the Nation Address was the proposal to introduce an Anti-Cartel law in the Philippines. In the United States and some other countries, such a law seeks to promote free trade and competition by dismantling cartels and other anti-competitive power that include predatory pricing (slashing prices to unfair levels) and price gouging (raising prices to unfair levels). Could be be referring to oil, cement or maybe the grain business? The guessing game is on.

Boots C. Dumlao

FPI seeks greater participation in gov't

From page B1

of tools, in whose department the Bureau of Product Standards is an organic agency, will advocate for quick release and conclusion reform of the EO," FPI president Arsenio Arcinas earlier said.

"We should have studied (for) a lot of these products that were released to us (which) we have to review now and subject to examinations, so the harm has been done already even before the government could even determine if they are substandard items," he added.

FPI chair Mendoza Carlos Jr. also urged Dominguez that the Philippines' product standards structure was actually quite lenient, considering that it had less than 100 product standards while neighboring countries had as many as 10,000.

Meanwhile, FPI has struck a partnership with the DOF to facilitate the prosecution of smuggling cases. The group had offered to provide evidentiary documentation to DOJ prosecutors regarding the current smuggling problem and the modus operandi of smugglers.

FPI had likewise proposed the establishment of a special court to try smuggling-related cases, similar to the "Green Court," which hears environment-related cases.

The group also reiterated its call for government to exercise its right to "compulsory acquisition" of undervalued imports under Section 2317 of the Tariffs and Customs Code of the Philippines.

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BUSINESS

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Meralco eyes new power generation projects

By Paolo G. Montecillo

Acquiring existing assets won't add new capacity to Luzon grid

MANILA ELECTRIC Co. (Meralco) is eyeing power generation assets that can add new capacity to the Luzon grid.

Meralco president Manuel V. Pangilinan said the utility intended to invest in coal, gas or another power plants to complement its power distribution business.

"We need new capacity to avoid a power crisis," Pangilinan said.

He said the company was planning to develop new power plants, instead of acquiring stakes in existing ones, to increase the supply of power particularly for Metro Manila residents.

The only viable clean power source for company was interested in, he said, was nuclear power.

Other renewable power sources like wind or solar energy are too inadequate for the market's requirements.

Pangilinan, however, had reservations when asked whether the company was willing to develop the idle Batasa-Naiche Power Plant.

"Whether we have to locate there in Batasa or build another one, I'm not sure. I'm not an engineer," he said.

The company targets to generate as much as 5000 megawatts from planned power projects in three years' time to meet the initial fears in the power generation business.

The capacity targeted by Meralco would depend on what the Luzon grid would need. Grid operator Transco, the company said the Luzon grid was likely to need 600 MW over the next three years.

While Meralco is keen on partnering with existing power-generation companies, Pangilinan noted that the preference was for Meralco to take a controlling or majority position.

Pangilinan's group acquired a controlling stake in Meralco last year after it delisted completely, buying out the Lopez family, which had been in control of the company for decades.

Gov't move to review MRT fare backed

By Daniel L. Lucas

SHAREHOLDERS OF Metro Rail Transit Corp. vote-mand President Benigno Aquino III's decision to move away from the policy of the previous administration of providing large subsidies to keep MRT3 fares low.

In a statement, MRT Group of Companies assistant vice president Arnold Leigh said the build-lease-transfer (BLT) agreement, signed in 1998 by the Department of Transportation and Communication and MRTC shareholders, set the base fare at P15.

"That base fare stood for hours from adjusted for foreign exchange and inflation rate movements that had occurred since the signing of the BLT agreement.

MRTC has been pushing the government to increase the fares since 2006.

According to the group, the 1998 Asian crisis affected the US dollar-based operating expenses of both LRT2 and MRT3. These

projects incurred in 1998 when the exchange rate was P25-$1 and completed after the Asian crisis when the exchange rate moved to P54-$1.

As a result, DOTC should presented before a congressional committee on transportation a minimum fare of P 17 and maximum fare of P34 as early as February 2000 up to January 2001 to address this situation.

The proposal was put on hold by the previous administration even when MRT3 fares were less than comparable bus fare rates.

Generally, rail transit fares are higher than comparable bus fare rates, Leigh said.

Adjusting MRT3 fares upward will minimize government's projected P6.500,000 loss in daily passengers along the Edsa corridor who rely on the MRT system as all-weather, reliable and timely means of transportation.

The group said the MRT3 project was delivered in operating condition at no cost to the government.

Smart president named WAC board member

SMART COMMUNICATIONS Inc. president and chief executive officer Napoleon L. Nazareno has been named member of the board of Wholesale Applications Community (WAC), an alliance of telecommunications companies worldwide committed to building an open applications platform.

Smart is the only Southeast Asian telecommunications company represented in the WAC board.

WAC recently announced its formation as a corporate entity, as well as the organization's leadership and board of directors. The company also announced it would join forces with the Joint Innovation Lab (JIL), accelerating the commercial launch of WAC-enabled application stores.

"The creation of WAC opens up many possibilities that promise to deliver many more benefits to mobile phone users. That is why Smart is proud to be part of this organization," Nazareno said.

"WAC will promote the development of more applications and services via an open platform for mobile applications. By creating a wholesale application ecosystem that will make it easier for developers to market their innovations, subscribers will ultimately benefit from the wider array of choices and value for money applications and services. Smart will focus on applications that address the need of subscribers in emerging markets, particularly prepaid users", he added.

Nazareno joins a distinguished lineup of officers and members of the WAC board, namely: Vodafone CEO Michel Combes, chair; Frisco Telecom deputy CEO Jean-Philippe Vesti, vice chair; AT&T CTO Jolta Donovan; Etisalat Mobile vice president Li Zhengmao; Deutsche Telekom CTO Olivier Bockpaul; GSMA chief strategy and technology officer Alex Sinclair; BT Group, president for mobile business group Dr Hyun-Myung Pyo; NTT Docomo SVP Kojiro Kogata; SK Telecom president for mobile network operations business Song Min Ho; Softbank Mobile Corp. senior executive vice president Tetsuo Matsunaga; Telecom Italia head of domestic market operations Mario Ferraino; Telefonica group director of global new services Vivek Badrinath; Telekom Austria Group CEO Hannes Ametsreiter; Telenor EVP and head of corporate development Morten Karlsen Sorby; and Verizon EVP and CTO Dick Lynch.

Everyday, High Performers Raise the Game

It was more than ten years ago when Mike Fernandez's future was determined in Sicily by a friend. He first job interview at Accenture, one of the world's leading management consulting, technology services and outsourcing companies. Little did he know that this company would be his first and only employer for 11 years since getting his degree in Computer Science.

Mike began his Accenture career as an analyst in 1999. He is part of the Technology workforce that is made up of IT enthusiasts who focus on applying systems integration and application outsourcing expertise across different technology platforms and industries. For each day that he worked at Accenture, he says it has been one great adventure leading to his promotion as senior manager.

Today, Mike supervises four teams consisting of 100 people in Accenture's technology workforce. Working together, they ensure that Accenture's publicity accessible and internal websites are up and running 24/7. In all, his team manages about 10 websites.

"There is more to developing and maintaining a website than just pairing fresh content and putting up a creative design," says Mike. "The IT professionals I work with use the latest technologies on content management and web development. On top of the application development and maintenance work we do, we also need to understand the business of our clients in order for us to help them achieve their business goals."

Mike adds that "among others, we look at the metrics and performance of our applications as part of our work. We have to make sure that our systems can handle all the transactions that are happening on the websites. Our processes have to be constantly updated so that we can easily react to challenges that come our way. Whether it is a publicity website site or an intranet site, we ensure that we are consistent with the quality of work we are giving our stakeholders and clients."

Looking back

Over his 11-year career at Accenture, Mike remembers many of the milestones he experienced that encourage him to stay in the company.

The first was about two and-a-half years into his job as an analyst. Mike worked on several projects that required him to build expertise in different areas of programs. His very first project at Accenture was the telecoms Visual Basic-based Training Management System that tracked the participation of all Accenture employees in globally-offered training courses.

Following this, he was promoted to Team Lead, where his leadership skills were tested on a team of three to five people who handled the operations for the back-end of Accenture's Procurement application.

In 2003, Mike was assigned to a web development project that encompassed Accenture's internal websites, including Accenture.com. The sites are now maintained by two Accenture centers – Chicago and Manila. They work together to develop options, processes and applications to improve the company website, as well as to support and enhance the company's online presence.

In September 2003, Mike achieved a major milestone when he was promoted to senior team lead or associate manager with 8 to 10 people under his supervision. Two years later, another promotion followed, this time as a manager.

Today, in his current level as senior manager, Mike knows that he continues to work at Accenture due to the numerous opportunities for professional and personal advancement.

"At Accenture, I'm not only exposed to the latest technology I get to use it every day," he said. "Throughout my career, I have witnessed and contributed to many about the many developments, changes and improvements in what IT means to the company. I am confident in my position. I am able to pass on the knowledge to my team, just like what my mentors did when I started."

The challenges and perks

As a senior manager for his team, Mike constantly challenges himself to be better at what he does.

This also inspires him creative by to motivate his people to become high performers. This is particularly crucial when they have to manage an average of one million website hits daily and ensure zero downtime.

Mike's leadership skills have also been honed through his assignments. His previous "Management by Walking Around," constantly going around the floor, talking to his teams, joking with them at times and answering their concerns directly. Or some days, he spends lunch breaks with the team, an activity akin to a mini teambuilding event.

It's not all straight work for him, though. One aspect of the job that he enjoys immensely is the opportunity to travel to many countries to meet with clients face-to-face. These trips have exposed him to different cultures, provided new venues to try many foods and given him a taste of the world, and paved the way to building a network of friends.

Mike usually reserves Friday nights for get-togethers with his buddies, and likes to spend weekends with his family. Aside from keeping up with these going on, he still finds time to pursue personal passions such as photography – he is an active member of the Accenture Photography Club – and basketball.

At work or at play, Mike strives to ensure that he is always on top of his game – and lives up to being a real Accenture high performer.

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LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

Invitation for Pre-qualification

Name of Country: Republic of the Philippines
Name of Project: Manila Trunk Sewerage Project (MTSP)
Design and Build of the Manila Water Reuse Project
(Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila)
(Contract No. MWTP 08A)
Loan No. 7311-PH

This invitation for pre-qualification follows the general procurement notice for this project that appeared in Development Business No. 988 (51 667 of January 1, 2008.

The Manila Water Company, Inc. (MWCI) has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development through the Land Bank of the Philippines toward the cost of the Manila Trunk Sewerage Project (MTSP), and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this loan to payments under the contract for the MWTP 08A Design and Build of the Manila Water Reuse Project (Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila). Manila Water Company, Inc. intends to pre-qualify contractors and/or firms for the above-mentioned project. It is expected that invitations for bid will be made on or before September 2010.

Prequalification will be conducted through pre-qualification procedures specified in the World Bank's Guidelines: Procurement Under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits, May 2004, revised October 2006 and May 2010, and is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the guidelines.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain a copy of the prequalification documents from the office of MCOM (Manila Water Company Incorporated's nominated) Project Management Consultants) by contacting 63 2 478 3288.

Applicants are encouraged to attend the prequalification meeting / orientation that will be conducted on 5 August 2010 at 10:00 AM at ABCOM's office (23rd Floor, Fort Legend Towers, 3rd Avenue Corner 31st Street, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City Philippines 1634).

Applications for pre-qualification should be submitted in sealed envelopes, delivered to the address below on or before 2:00 PM on 5 September 2010 and be clearly marked "Application to Prequalify for MWTP 08A Design and Build of the Manila Water Reuse Project (Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila)"

Ms Cristina Estandarte
Senior Manager, Contracts and Vendor Management (Department)
Manila Water Company Incorporated
MWSS Administration Building
489 Katipunan Road, Balara
Quezon City
Philippines 1105
Phone: 63 2 917 5900

CRISTINA ESTANDARTE
Senior Manager, Contracts and Vendor Management Department
Manila Water Company Incorporated

Manila Water

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTANCY SERVICES)

Country: PHILIPPINES
Name of Project: Manila Third Sewerage Project (MTSP)
Sector: Water and Environment
CONSULTANCY SERVICES
Loan No. : 7311-PH
Project ID No. : EL-P8 (2010)

Manila Water Company, Inc. (MWCI) has received financing from the World Bank in the amount of US$ 50 million to be utilized for the Manila Third Sewerage Project (MTSP), part of the proceeds of which will be applied towards payments under a contract for Consultancy services. The services to be provided (hereinafter the "Services") are briefly described as follows:

A Quantitative Market Research to Establishing Wastewater Awareness 2010

Strategic Objective	To determine the demographics and psychographics of Manila Water customers and their attitude towards wastewater and the environment, that will serve as a basis tool for the development of an effective Wastewater Education and Communication (IEC) campaign for wastewater advocacy and user rehabilitation.
Services Scope	Conduct of a Quantitative Market Research Study
	1. To generate key inputs for the development of an effective wastewater IEC campaign
	2. To develop baseline metrics from which to compare future surveys and measure success of IEC campaigns
Project Coverage	Key Manila Water customers from all eight (8) cities and municipalities (Las Piñas to Metro Manila and two (2) in expansion areas)
Delivery period	Estimated time (1) month, to commence two (2) days from receipt of notice to proceed

MWCI hereby invites eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested consultants may submit expressions of interest (EOI) for the above services, together with the documentary requirements that will establish their eligibility to participate in this meeting (Eligibility Documents). MWCI's eligibility requirements for this project may be accessed at the MWCI website – http://manilawater.com

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers (current edition).

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours (8:00 to 17:00 hours, Monday to Friday).

Expressions of interest and complete Eligibility Documents must be delivered to the address below on or before 5 August 2010. Submission of EOI via email will be allowed but Eligibility Documents should be in hard copies.

MS. CRISTINA T. ESTANDARTE
Sr. Manager, Contracts & Vendor Management Department
Manila Water Company, Inc.
Ground Floor, MWSS Administration Building
489 Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City 1105
Telephone No. (632) 917-5900 loc. 147
E-mail: tina.estandarte@manilawater.com

SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
Petitioner,
-versus-
SSC CASE NO. 12-0010-08
ST. JOHN DE BAPTIST LA SALLE SCHOOL, INC.,
and its responsible officers: JEFFREY G.
CHRISTIANSEN, Chairman, PHILIP C. CHRISTIANSEN,
Vice-Chairman, BRO. ARMIN A. LUISTRO, FSC,
President, and
BRO. ROBERTO B. GREGORIO, FSC,
Vice-President,
Respondents.

SUMMONS

TO : ST. JOHN DE BAPTIST LA SALLE SCHOOL, INC.
c/o BRO. ROBERTO B. GREGORIO, FSC
President, St. John de Baptist La Salle School, Inc. and
BRO. ARMIN A. LUISTRO, FSC
Vice-President, St. John de Baptist La Salle School, Inc.
ADDRESS

You are hereby required to file within fifteen (15) days from the date of publication of this Summons with the Office of the Commission – Legal Department, SSS Building, Diliman, Quezon City, and to serve on the petitioner, Social Security System, SSS Building, Diliman, Quezon City, through its Counsel, Atty. Ruby Rosalie Ong, Social Security System, SSS Building, Diliman, Quezon City, a copy of your answer to the petition which accompanies this Summons.

You are further required to bring to your answer copies of evidence (SS Form 8) to be used by you in support of your defenses, if any. Failure to answer within the time prescribed, this Honorable Commission may, upon motion of the petitioner, declare you in default and shall proceed to render judgment in accordance with the petition or such other relief as may be warranted by the facts established by the petitioner and the applicable law and jurisprudence.

BY ORDER:

Makati City, Philippines, July 1, 2010.

SSC Atty. 2-2010

SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION

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LTFRB A27

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GUADALUPE MARBAS-MAGNO

passed away in the Grace of our Lord on July 31, 2010 at the age of 79.

Her bereaved husband **Maj. Gen. Jose P. Magno Jr. (Ret.)**; her children **Vicky** & **Tom**, **Amy**, **Claire**, **Joey** & **Grace** and **Valerie** & **Joey**; her grandchildren **Gabby**, **Kiko**, **Jonat**, **Carl**, **CJ**, **Patty**, **Victoria**, **Stanley**, **Nikki**, **Miguel** and **Bianca**, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Chapel 1 of the Mortuary and Crematory of the Heritage Park, Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

Interment will be on August 4, 2010, Wednesday at The Heritage Park, Taguig City. Time of interment to be advised.

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM AND TRADE EXPO 2010 AND THE 1ST PHILIPPINE CULINARY TOURISM EXPO
Shown standing at the center is Undersecretary Vicente R. Romano for Tourism Planning and Promotions of the Department of Tourism who graced the event with Regional Director Maria O. Rematulla of Ilocos Region, Regional Director Glenda Z. Dizon of Cagayan Valley Region, Tess Aglian the ITTE event manager and PCTO president, Rafael S. Chiu is the chairman of Philippine Culinary Tourism Organization, another participants from the Resort and Travel Sectors. The event is a three-day expo from July 23-25, held at SM Megamall Trade Hall 3.

Labor group backs POEA implementation of mandatory Pag-IBIG membership for OFWs

THE TRADE UNION CONGRESS of the Philippines (TUCP), the country's largest labor confederation, expressed its support for a new policy that makes Pag-IBIG membership a requisite for departing OFWs.

"The policy is the offshoot of an agreement between the Pag-IBIG Fund and the Philippine Overseas Employment Authority (POEA), under which the latter shall require the collection of Pag-IBIG membership contributions in any guise as a requirement for the issuance of the exit clearance or the Overseas Employment Certificate (OEC).

The POEA has started collecting an initial contribution of P600 from OFWs, equivalent to six months advanced contribution to Pag-IBIG.

Ernesto Herrera, TUCP secretary general, said the country's largest labor confederation believes that mandatory Pag-IBIG membership is beneficial to OFWs, and that making it a part of POEA's requirements "is the best way to ensure that they become members."

"It is the role of POEA to promote the welfare of OFWs, and facilitating their registration as Pag-IBIG members is a way of doing that, as it gives them access to the Fund's savings program," he said.

The POEA maintains a computerized system of documenting all OFWs, which includes a collection system for fees and payments required for the issuance of an exit clearance.

"Tapping POEA is one of the least, most cost effective ways of registering OFWs as Pag-IBIG members," Herrera said.

He also maintained that OFWs should not view POEA's collection of Pag-IBIG contributions as an added burden.

"Pag-IBIG contributions are not fees but savings. And these savings not only earn dividends, but also give the members access to short-term loans and the most affordable housing loans in the country. This is an additional benefit for them," he said in opposition," he said.

"We should also remember that the objective of Pag-IBIG's universal membership coverage is to strengthen the Fund and sustain its housing finance program. That program not only makes homeownership a reality for Pag-IBIG members, but also creates thousands of jobs every year," he added.

Republic Act No. 9679, which took effect last year, made Pag-IBIG membership mandatory for Filipino seafarers as well as for workers employed by foreign employers, whether deployed here or abroad.

As of June this year, the Pag-IBIG fund has already released almost P50.1 billion worth of housing loans for over 32,000 units and P12 billion worth of short term loans to more than 664,000 member-borrowers.

INFOTECH

New Wave ratchets up pleasure level

By Charles E. Bahar

IT MAY not look much, but this stunning, looking device is probably what you will only need to fill up your bedroom with tunes, the sound is richer, you get more deep basses.

The second generation Wave music system (Sonic Boom processor significant improvements.

While the size remained as compact as the original, Bose engineers incorporated the intricate pattern of the tubes—called waves guides—found inside the casing.

Bose folds not only amplify the sound emanating from the Wave music system's two stereo speakers but also increase the low frequencies that would allow the sound of bass instruments like guitars and tubas to come out much more forceful.

This review really appreciated the big sound that came out from this tiny device. Even at full blast, the sound remained full, without suffering from the telltale sounds of overmodulated speakers.

Updates

While the Wave music system retains its original look, Bose designers made several makeovers like dividing all the control buttons and placing the half-in CD player in front.

This front-loading that I noticed off the top load style of the original) also plays MP3 CDs and CD-R/RWs created on a PC.

The display has automatic night-time dimming, adjustable brightness, and a line of text that can provide information of the track, artist and title for MP3 CDs.

There's an auxiliary input for your MP3 or other audio jacks, and a headphone jack should you wish to keep the music to yourself.

Those who hate the blaring sound of an alarm clock will appreciate the Wave music system's Clock-to-Music alarm. It gently wakes you up by gradually increasing the volume of the preset radio station or CD track.

No more buttons

Since Bose designers decided to eliminate the control buttons on the device, what they gave us instead is a 26-button, credit card-like remote.

While the remote control is well labeled and easy to understand, you may want to read the manual since some of the buttons have dual purposes. For example, pressing the Seek/Track finds the next radio station with a strong signal, or skips to next/previous CD tracks.

While the remote control is much more fun and convenient than having to reach for the device every time you want to do changes or adjustments, the problem arises whenever misplaced or lost the tiny remote.

The review recommends purchasing an extra remote to have on hand in case the included one goes into hiding.

Samsung adds 2 new notebooks to its array

By Raquel P. Gomez

SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS is on high gear this year and seems unstoppable.

In the six months to June, the Korean consumer electronics giant has kept introducing new products, expanding the local market reach. Samsung launched smart phones, PC peripherals, cameras, flat panel TVs, home appliances, and new notebooks.

Samsung smartphone can now be found in the R440 and R480 lineup of full-featured notebooks, apart from other Samsung laptops that were introduced in March.

Specs of the R440 and R480 notebooks clearly indicate that they are loaded and powerful, yet their prices are low enough to cater to the price-conscious middle market consumers looking for value-for-money gadgets.

Samsung product manager Adrian Cheng said the new notebooks only range from P40,000 to P55,000—perfect for the typical student or student and young urban professionals.

At P54,900, the R440-JT04PH is the top-of-the-line value-for-money notebook, boasting of Core i5 processor, standard 2.4 GHz speed, plus 4 GB DDR3 memory and a 1 GB NVIDIA GeForce graphics card. It has HDMI, eSATA, 4 USB ports, 3-in-1 card reader, LAN port and VGA port, allowing connections with old and new PC peripherals and additions, the linkup to a flat panel TV, gaming console or another PC or LCD monitor. It is also installed with 64-bit Windows 7 operating system.

Priced at P50,990, the R440-JT03PH is the entry-level notebook that boasts of Core i5 processor clocked at 2.26 GHz speed with 3 MB Cache, 2 GB DDR3 memory and 512 MB ATI Radeon graphics card and a 320 GB hard drive. (I is also already installed with a Windows 7 OS).

All the new Samsung notebooks feature 14-inch HD LED display the screen size most sought after by consumers, Cheng said.

As to the design and form factor, the new notebooks feature "touch of color crystal finish" or a shiny hard plastic casing with distinct subtle patterns. The inside features a low-profile island keyboard (chiclet) or full-sized keyboard and LED 16 touchpad.

Since these notebooks are branded, they come installed with proprietary Samsung tools such as AnyPC remote application enabling a secure one-click connection to a home or office PC, Phoenix FullSuite software (a useful tool that allows the motherboard's status and erase vital data on the notebook), and sleep-and-charge port (allows portable devices to be charged even when the notebook is turned off).

Samsung also introduced two new netbooks, which are enhanced versions of its previous laptops. The new N220 features a 10.1 inch LED and reflective display, which is a good option for typing and viewing images as there is no "mirror" effect, and 14 hours of battery life.

The new N100 netbook, on the other hand, features a 10.1 LED anti reflective display and 12 hours of battery life.

Cheng said the new notebooks with long battery life are intended for all-day computing anywhere and everywhere.

SRP for the N220 is P24,900, while the N100 carries a price tag of P21,990.

Low-cost Nokia packs a punch

By Paolo G. Montecillo

SOCIAL NETWORKING is no longer just a buzzword in today's world. Sites like Facebook and Twitter have become the main means of communication, especially among tech-savvy Filipinos.

Known as the use of smart phones also drives the increasing popularity of social networking, which now occupies a special space in everyday life.

Until recently, however, the benefits of mobile Internet have been only for those who can afford high data charging and expensive handheld gadgets.

But as mobile phone maker Nokia recently showed, anyone could and should be able to enjoy social networking for a price that's cool and won't break a bank.

Nokia recently launched its new C3 smartphone, the C3-00, a joint of the most capable budget phones that the company has ever come out with.

"People want a good-looking, affordable handset that allows them to stay connected, in a way that suits their lifestyle," Nokia Philippines general manager Dennis Rebot said. "Our newest and most affordable qwerty phone does just that. You can send the SMS and update your status whenever you are so you can keep in touch with friends and family, wherever you are."

The new phone's features include a user-engaged camera, GPRS and Wi-Fi connectivity and 8 gigabytes of storage space.

The C3 comes in hot pink, classy gray and golden silver.

But the phone's defining feature is its ability to allow users to stay connected to different sites.

Apart from Facebook and Twitter, the phone has the social Messaging application, mail push email functions, which allows users with as many as 10 e-mail accounts using the same phone.

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BUSINESS

Manufacturing growth slowed down in May

Before roadwork, SLTC waits for word on rates

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE MALOLOS-based operator of South Luzon Expressway (SLEx) maintains got all the necessary government approvals for the toll raise it hopes to impose before it starts building an actual road.

South Luzon Tollways Corp. (SLTC) is all set to start construction of Toll Road 4 (TR4)—a 56-kilometer extension of the highway connecting Metro Manila to Laguna City in the Quezon Province.

But according to SLTC president Isaac David, the company is "having second thoughts" because of the rates.

The company, he said, did not want a repeat of the recent difficulties it encountered when it tried to raise SLEx toll rates.

"We want assure that we can [recoup our investment in TR4," David said. "We want to be confident to get the necessary approvals for the new rates we'll be charging before we start construction."

SLTC is expected to spend P10 billion for the construction of TR4.

The company spent P12 billion to rehabilitate SLEx from an aging two-lane road to a world-class four-lane highway in exchange for its investment. SLTC owns the 30-year contract to collect fees from motorists using the road.

SLTC earlier announced plans to hike toll rates by 25% percent. The adjustment to rates was supposed to take effect last June 30. It has been moved to Aug. 16 due to protests by transport groups.

Apart from doubling the length of SLEx, SLTC also built a short road section that connected the expressway to the Southern Tagalog Arterial Road (Star) toll.

This means that motorists driving from Metro Manila can go straight to Batangas City without having to pass through congested local roads.

By Reuters/ W. Domingo

NSO: Volume grew by 25.5%, value by 18.7% year on year

GROWTH IN the value and volume of manufacturing output in May slowed down very sharply from a year ago, according to the National Statistics Office.

Still, value grew by 18.7 percent, while volume rose by 25.5 percent from that of last year, NSO data showed.

Results from the agency's latest monthly manufacturing survey of selected industries (Mosvi)—which covers 28 major industries—showed that the rise in output value contrasted for the seventh straight month as 11 industries grew by two digits.

Leading the pack were petroleum products at 75.2 percent, fabricated metal products (39.6 percent), food (36.1 percent), and paper and paper products (30.7 percent).

Growing by at least a fifth were miscellaneous manufactures (32.1 percent), wood and wood products (29.1 percent), basic metals (28.1 percent), and textiles products (22.2 percent).

Other gainers in May were beverages (15.5 percent), rubber and plastics products (15.1 percent), textiles (8.6 percent), nonmetallic mineral products (6.4 percent), food (4.1 percent), nonmetallic minerals (2.9 percent), and furniture and fixtures (2.7 percent).

On the other hand, four sectors reduced their outputs, led by footwear and apparel.

Others that scaled down output were tobacco, publishing and printing and chemicals.

In terms of volume, there were 12 gainers that posted two-digit growth, led by electrical machinery (66.4 percent) and manufactured machinery with 63 percent.

Also gaining by at least a third were petroleum products (51.7 percent), miscellaneous manufactures (41.7 percent), transport equipment (39.5 percent) and paper and paper products (31.2 percent).

Meralco sees lower power rates in months ahead

By Arra B. Rarus

POWER DISTRIBUTOR Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) expects electricity prices to finally go down with the onset of the rainy season.

"We're hopeful that the rates will continue [and] that will provide the improved generating plants the opportunity to offer more capacity to the system and ... put pressure on prices in the coming months," said Oscar Reyes, senior energy advisor and chief operating officer of Meralco.

"If the dams are able to get back up to their safety levels then the higher dispatch of hydro plants should help the pricing situation."

Increased rainfall is expected to improve the capability of hydropower plants, which have been generating minimal power due to low water levels. Reservoirs Dams dried up in the first half of the year because of the El Niño weather disturbances.

The low generating capacity of Luzon's hydropower facilities was exacerbated by the inability of some shutdowns of a number of plants in the grid due to maintenance.

According to the distribution utility, power rates typically decline in the second half of the year and increase during the summer season due to a surge in demand.

Meralco's external communications manager Joe Zaldarriaga had explained that the start of Binnland Power Corp.'s wet season rates in July was also expected to provide a tempering effect to the generation charges this month.

In rates only last May that electricity prices doubled to decline, following a spike in generation charges in April.

The surge in electricity prices was attributed to the extremely high prices at the wholesale electricity spot market (WESM), from which Meralco had contracted 14.5 percent of its supply.

The light power supply, owing to the shut downs, had supply problems and low generating capacity of certain power plants also made the situation worse.

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In setting policy, RP bucks Asia trend

By Michelle V. Rarus

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas said it refused to succumb to what it described as "herd behavior" in deciding to keep its key policy rates at 7.50-8.50 hours—bucking the trend in other countries in the region where officials started raising their respective rates.

The BSP said it would keep its rates—a pattern for overnight borrowing and 6 percent for overnight lending—because of the country's possible inflation environment.

Even though the economy grew by a robust 7.3 percent in the first quarter, domestic prices were increasing well within comfortable levels, it said.

"Normalization of policy settings should not be dictated by herd behavior," BSP Assistant Governor Nes. Diwa Guinigundo said in a briefing Friday. "Just because other countries have started doing it does not mean we should follow the route."

Amador said the decision to increase the policy rates would depend on cues on the external environment, but more so on domestic developments.

In the case of the Philippines, she said, the 7.3-percent growth of the economy in the first quarter might have signaled recovery from last year's downturn. But the latest inflation rate, as well as the projected inflation rate over the medium term were still within the government's targets.

Therefore, Amador said, the BSP would still afford to keep its key policy rates low to continue fueling the economy.

Low interest rates encourage borrowings, which in turn support investments and consumption upticks, as inflation threatened to breach target levels.

According to the National Statistics Office, average inflation in the first half stood at 4.2 percent. Citing this figure, BSP officials said inflation this year would not likely breach the official government cap, ranging from 3.5 to 5.5 percent.

Sona fills US think tank with hope

By Doris C. Dumlao

PRESIDENT AQUINO's vow to implement fiscal discipline and create an investor-friendly environment has won the right signals to businesses and financial markets, according to US-based think tank Global Source.

In a Global Source commentary written by economists Romeo Bernardo and Margarita Gonzalez, the first State of the Nation Address (Sona), "highlighted the seriousness of the new administration in addressing the country's fiscal dilemma and promoting investments, but also provided ideas but to which performance would be measured."

The economists also noted that Mr. Aquino's speech, "delivered in the native language, ... was simple, direct to the point and devoid of the gimmicky that marked previous Sonas."

But the think tank pointed out that the Sona "unsurprisingly garnered mixed reviews." Some lauded it for hearing it on the important issues of the day, while others criticized it for lack of vision and failure to identify root causes of the country's problems.

The Global Source remained hopeful.

"The agenda has been laid out and only needs to be executed. We have yet to see how this rabble through are shared in this point since that we are not yet involved in spending will flow to be realized to be seen," Bernardo gets in the worst case," it said.

BSP exec airs optimism on economy

A BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas official said the Philippines could achieve not only the 7 to 8 percent growth rate being targeted by the Aquino administration, but even a double-digit figure if more crucial fix in attracting more foreign investments would be given the necessary focus.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo also said that macroeconomic growth rate of at least 10 percent starting next year could be attained if structural, especially those involving infrastructure and bureaucracy, aside by the Investment during his term of the earlier address could be fulfilled.

According to Guinigundo, the Philippines already has vast natural supply of skilled workers, while the country's infrastructure environment is quite favorable for business.

However, he said, infrastructure would have to be developed, and the government and regulatory environment should be improved.

"If we want to jumpstart the economy toward a very high growth, we will need foreign capital. I do not see why [foreign investors] would not start investing in the country if we have an increase in heightening the reforms. We have a lot of skilled workers," Guinigundo said.

Concerning infrastructure, the central bank official said the government must not only put up sufficient roads and bridges, but would also need to address the long-standing problem of high power rates. Many power is a major input for production, bringing the cost of electricity down would make investing in the Philippines more profitable.

Currently, the Philippines is said to have the second highest power rates in Asia next to Japan.

Getting the cost of transporting goods from one place to another through better road infrastructure, would also help attract more investments, he said.

On the bureaucracy, Guinigundo said being able to cut up a business without surrounding is corruptive in government agencies was also necessary.

"If 10-percent growth rate is doable as long as we put in place the necessary infrastructure and the right policies," he said.

Michelle V. Rarus

LIFESTYLE Arts&Books

Giving Cebu back its Main Street

THE MAJESTIC provincial capital of Cebu marks not only the end of Jones Avenue but also the start of the mountains, which, in the 1960s, was thought to signify the end of the city.

IT'S A GOOD beginning, one that tells of better things to come.

Mayor Michael Rama of Cebu, a staunch heritage advocate, has asked prominent Cebuana philanthropist Marylen Sabitsbangon Yenko or chair a committee to beautify the city.

Together with her vice chair, Marguerite Uhalliet Young has embarked on cleaning up city streets and rehabilitating Osmeña Boulevard to recapture the elegance and ambiance that Jones Avenue (Jo Awwe as names it old was like.

Only a few blocks of Jones Avenue remain in its original glory. The rest, a hodgepodge of impromptu enhancement and ad-hoc landscaping, is, indeed, ready for massive cleaning up and rejuvenation.

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Augusto F. Villalon

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"SUNRISE Flowers" is Capati's version of a crab from the pass.

HAILED GOLD. One of Capati's works (who) makes at his first solo exhibit at Art Informal, Greenhills, Aug. 3.

"INFIDELITY." One pensar artwork in his farm in Lipa, Batangas.

Art of anagama pottery

TELL ORDER. Maze "Patis," one of Capati's works for his solo exhibit.

By Joe Peruyero
Contributor

HAVING been a potter for almost 40 years, and as president of the Potters' Association, I have met and worked with many pansophic artists. Shiito Capati III and I have known each other for some time and we share a particular passion—longanga.

Some years ago he walked into our Pottery School in Makati asking he wanted to ask me some questions on woodfiring. Looking back, I think he just needed to talk to someone who understood what he was attempting to do.

As his story unfolded, I realized he had done something truly incredible. From his experience living in Japan, as a high-school student and from reading books, he had reproduced and fired an ancient kiln design on his own, without any assistance at all.

He had dug a true clay kiln out of a bank of earth in his farm in Batangas exactly like those found in 16th-century Japan. Not only that, he had fired it and remained a temperature high enough to melt ash glaze as well as the clay that formed the roof of the kiln.

I knew then that he was either a madman or a pottery genius, more likely a bit of both. Either way, his passion for fire and clay were clear to me.

ANAGAMA potter Pedro Capati III conducts a workshop at Silliman University in Dumaguete City. In the audience is Jaime de Guzman, one of the pioneers of pottery in the Philippines.

JAR FOR LIFE. Collectors find Capati's pots priceless.

Woodfire pioneers

The pioneers of woodfire in the country are Nella Quirubin, Arita and Joyce de Guzman, and Gay and Ed Dalangin of Design Center Philippines.

I had the privilege of visiting and living with all of them starting in the early 1980s so I witnessed first hand the agonies and ecstasy of high-temperature woodfire, giving me great respect for the technique. Most of my early losses and my rare works later have fired to 1,200 kilns because of their reliability and because are preferred making classic glazes like Tenmoku, Celadon and Copper Red.

It wasn't till I was in my 50s that I decided to take on the wood-challenge, and I had the benefit of some years of experience as well as many good friends to help.

Most ancient

This is also why I was amazed that Capati, only in his 20s and by himself, would start with the most difficult of kilns, the anagama, his courage has paid off, as we can see from his latest works.

"Anagama" literally means "cave kiln," because it is the most ancient of high-temperature kilns. Anagamas are usually 3-4 meters long or longer, and the fringe can last for three days or more.

Capati has his own style of firing which he calls "laid back," meaning, he takes his time the first day or two. Later, when it reaches white heat, things get exciting.

What distinguishes the anagama style is the unusual textures and glaze effects it produces. The ring the fire and the potter has to tame are. With ordinary kilns, potters prepare the colorful glazes separately and apply by dipping or painting.

In the anagama, the pieces are directly exposed to the fire and the ash falls on the pots like snow. When the temperature is reached, the ashes melt to form a glaze that runs down the sides of the work. These patterns of glass like drips together with the marks of the fire leave an incredibly complex and beautiful surface.

CAPATI'S earliest "Bird," which rules on Syria's birthday pot

The design is the most ancient of high-temperature kilns. Anagamas are usually 3-4 meters long or longer, and the firings can last for three days or more.

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"TSUBO." One of its sizes

Influence and inspiration

Capati has proven himself to be an emerging master of the technique, having the keen intuition it requires, especially when loading the kiln. He must decide on the position of each piece and how it will react to the fire. This step alone can take days. The firing cycle, from loading and firing to cooling can take 7-10 days.

Capati has strong feelings about using local resources. He gathers his clay from around the Philippines and mixes by hand. He prefers mango wood for firing because it produces beautiful colors including a near ebonite blue.

I should point out that we anagama potters are using wood from trees deemed invasive or otherwise fallen, as there is no our contribution to global warming. In other words, our fuel is carbon-neutral in the sense that if the felled trees were left to rot on the ground, the carbon released would be the same. Capati is also thinking of planting his own trees that later can be harvested in a sustainable way.

Capati's open-air workshop and kiln shed are made of simple materials like wood and bamboo. Clearly, he is inspired by and thrives on his idyllic surroundings. From the sound of the wind in the trees and thunder during storms are an inspiration to him. Nature is a strong influence in his work. Sphenoraea rocks, shells and even life abound.

Strong thrower

In the beginning, Capati's work was more centered on function, being a strong thrower on the potter's wheel. He also likes to use the coiling technique to build huge jars of sometimes more than a meter tall.

His simple shapes are strong and clear and have a perfect surface for recording the marks of fire and ash. Lately, he has been doing sculpture as well. It is interesting that his sculpture has a similar feeling as his pottery. One anagama firing being an important part of it.

Since 1924, a longanga supporter of ceramic art, happens to own one of Capati's ceramic inspired by the form of a blowfish. She comments: "For me it is a sculpture. I hardly see myself when offering tea. It's the kind of piece that draws attention and keeps you engaged. Just seems nearly and the natural. My favorite expression of art being the latest."

Capati says about his latest exhibit: "As a potter I've learned to have the deepest respect for the craft. As an artist, I wouldn't have been one if I were not a potter. 'Element' is a testimony to that."

When art and craft, function and sculpture come together in harmony and balance, this must be a potter's highest achievement.

"Elements," an exhibition of anagama fired pottery and sculpture, runs Aug. 3-28 at Art Informal, 277 Connecticut St., San Juan, Manila. Call (0918) 8950898 or 725-8038.

E-mail the author at joeyperu@yahoo.com

Giving Cebu back . . .

Pamagat #7

In its day, Jones Avenue was Cebu's Champs Elysees, a multi-tree-lined avenue flanked by leafy promenades that ran in a straight line up the center of the city.

It was built during the American colonial era to connect the public or narrow streets of the old Spanish-colonial Cebu to outlying areas being opened up by the American government as its new city.

Jones Avenue ended in an oval at the front steps of the grand provincial capitol built right on the foothills of the mountain range forming the city's eastern boundary.

Classical Revival

Built in the 1920s in the Classical Revival style favored by the American colonialists, the capitol was designed to dominate the Jones Avenue vista, and dominate it does.

It is monumental architecture at its very best, an ensemble reminiscent of, in a small, small-scale provincial way, the majesty of the Washington DC Capitol Building.

The avenue, planned by the American regime as Cebu's premier street, was also set to be a testament to the progressiveness being introduced by the new government to everyday Philippine life.

Closest to the old city center since about the Cebu City Central Station, the hub of the railway line that ran along the eastern coast of the island. Although the rail line was never rehabilitated after World War II, the related station survived until the 1960s when it gave way to a number of government buildings.

Next to the rumbled train station stands shiitlessa historical High School, built during the American era to be the premier public high school with the most impressive sports facilities in the city. Classes are still held in the original heritage Gabaldon-style building now dwarfed by newer structures.

Favorite promenade

Another monument to the American educational system is the colonnaded façade of the Cebu Normal School, whose once-spacious grounds have been taken over by the massive building of a government bank.

At midpoint of Jones Avenue is Fuente Osmeña, a circular park with a fountain (fuente in Spanish) at its center marking the inaugural of the Cebu water system.

Fuente Osmeña is Cebu's favorite park and promenade. Filled on weekends with people, where many outdoor events are held and the city sets up its great Christmas tree every year.

Close to Fuente Osmeña were were the stately residences of Cebu's founding families, and where appropriately the former residence of President Sergio Osmeña survives and has become a museum displaying his memorabilia.

There was once in Fuente Osmeña. To our side of it was where the Bretchen's Islands Hospital was founded by the American colonial government. A little further up the avenue from the hospital is the imposing Cebu City Library.

Talk about propaganda buildings for the American regime. They were all on Jones Avenue. The avenue was a living encyclopedia of American colonial achievements which covered the entire spectrum from [illegible] (jeepney museum) to schools, public libraries, hospitals, and even the engineering feat of establishing a new city water system: enshrined in Fuente Osmeña.

Genteel ambiance

The most important thing about Jones Avenue [illegible] seems to remember who Mr. or Mrs. Jones was) is that it was Cebu's Main Street.

Like the Champs Elysées of Paris, it once was the city's main promenade, a linear park that linked the old and new city centers.

Jones Avenue was where Cebu's [illegible] were the avenue's residences, its [illegible] and its weekend diversion, an urban amenity that "progress" and "modernization" have taken away from the present generation of Cebuanos.

Cebu's Main Street is in more.

It's time to bring it back. Jones Avenue must be pedestrianized, its [illegible] on give Cebuanos another urban entertainment where people can go to escape the stress of living in congested city areas.

It's bringing the best Jones can teach to Cebu's Urban Streets, and, more importantly, it's about giving Cebu back its Main Street.

Maybe it's not about "restoring" the old look and feel of Jones Avenue—that's gone and will never return—but it's definitely about bringing back the genteel ambiance that Jones Avenue once had as a way of improving the quality of life in Cebu.

E-mail your comments to [illegible]@gmail.com.

A PERFECT circle punctuating the mid-point of old Jones Avenue is Cebu landmark Fuente Osmeña, where the city congregates for weekend picnics and fresh air.

Nune Alvarado strips the scales off society's eyes

By Cai Ordoyo
Contributor

THERE is art that, in the great French artist Henri Matisse formula, is tranquilizing, detailed to the smallest touch where a seated businessman may luxuriate in power after a stressful day at work.

There are, however, certain artworks that are metaphorically emptied of answers and chairs to sit on. To borrow the words of the late art critic Leo Steinberg, these are "artworks for thinking the connoisseur."

Among these are the recent images of Bienvenido "Nune" Ang Alvarado's anguished human figures, confounding in their stark, haunting, wide desperation, or horribly still in economic stasis; and Emil Gilander's nocturnal dreamscapes descending into the psychic depths of Hades, here symbolically manifested in the bowels of Erebus, the evil Ogha district.

...And then there are the works of Humberto Alvarado, who, hailing from Negros Occidental, Bacolod Palmar, Ingay), a less qualified scientific to represent another view of life away from Manila. Coming from the land famous for sugarcane and the great Martin Alvarado could easily be a preoccupation of cane, a languid and respectful way of life. What he wrought on his canvases, however, was the turmoil in his land, driven by class conflict—a conflict he would paint "who—into our room of land and the ambivalent of peasantry ruling in the fields.

Searching with tension

These paintings strike with the tension of transformation, imminent death, and dissolution of live. Done with the prospect of violence and bloodshed, his canvases teem with human figures, both symbolic and effective of terrible personages prominent on the political scene in Negros recent.

Riddled with symbols—lizards, hornbugs, flowers, crocodiles, reptiles, skulls, flames, the American flag, sugar mills, soldiers, and, of course, sugar cubes—Alvarado's paintings gain across the landscape of an unceasing society.

Despite the variety of his powerful images, what was truly remarkable was the distinctiveness of the artist's painterly style—a style limited by an almost stark monolithic like sharpness where human figures are rendered in a stylized, angular, and tense physiognomy, indicative of a state of tension and struggle.

Interestingly, the titles of his exhibitions exist in unity in Bonggay, a match of Alvarado's pride of being a Negrense.

Societal conflict

His current show at Galeria Anna shows Alvarado vigilante ing his grip on the stranglehold of societal conflict. He focuses his lens on a specific subject: Fisherfolk and fish vendors.

Fittingly titled "Pandan" (meaning fish trader in Bonggay Ilokano in Tagalog), the theme expresses Alvarado's emotional affinity with his people and provides the artist with images that are symbols for his working message: all these artist with images that are symbols for his working message: all these artist with images that are symbols for his working message: all these

Film cycle focuses on madly cinematic Madrid

"WOMEN on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown"

"OPEN Your Eyes"

INSTITUTO CERVANTES de Manila, the cultural arm of the Spanish Embassy, re-places film gems set in Spain's historical capital of Madrid as it presents Madrid: Una Ciudad de Cine this month, every Saturday 6 p.m., at Instituto Cervantes' Salón de Actos.

Gaining critical recognition worldwide, film productions which used Madrid and the surrounding area as backdrops are pulling plaudits at Film Festivals and getting hot on the box office. One of them is the Goya award winner "Tirez-vous Contre Le Soleil (Love Can Cost Everything)" which will be shown Aug. 7. The film, directed by José Luis Garci, offers a nostalgic vision of several people in Madrid all managing to survive in the later 40's post-war era.

Showing on Aug. 14 is Manuel Gómez Pereira's romance comedy "El Amor Perjudica Seriamente La Salud (Love Can Seriously Damage Your Health)," about a long time on-again off-again love affair between two characters played by Penélope Cruz and Antonio Dieguez when the Beatles arrived in Madrid in 1965.

If New York has Woody Allen, Madrid a epicenterpiece with Pedro Almodóvar. Screening on Aug. 11 is "Mujeres al Borde de un Ataque de Nervios (Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown)," a comedy that brought Almodóvar to international attention, having been nominated for the 1988 Academy Awards and winning five Goyas, including Best Film.

If you are in the mood for a psychological thriller, Alejandro Amenábar's "Abre Los Ojos (Open Your Eyes)" is the film for you. Screening on Aug. 26, this film depicts the story of a former womanizer (Eduardo Noriega), disfigured in a car crash, and has trouble distinguishing dreams from reality. Amenábar (Director Cameron Crowe remade this film as "Vanilla Sky" in 2001, with Tom Cruise in the lead role and Penélope Cruz reprising her role as Sofia.

Madrid: Una Ciudad de Cine is organized by Instituto Cervantes de Manila in collaboration with the Spanish Embassy in the Philippines and Spanish Agency International Cooperation for Development (AECID).

Admission to all the screenings is free on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, call 5261482 or visit http://manila.cervantes.es.

Instituto Cervantes de Manila is at #115 TM Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila.

UST Singers is Choir of the World again

By Antonio C. Hila
Contributor

THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas Singers have answered their choral might once more by recently winning the much-coveted title Choir of the World, otherwise known as the famous Tolosa-ville Grand Prize, at the 2010 Llangollen International Music Eisteddfod in Wales, UK, reputedly the oldest and most prestigious choral competition in the world.

The UST choir had bagged the prize previously in 1995.

"This is the first time the prize was won by a choir twice in 65 years of the festival," said UST Singers founding music director and conductor Fidel Calalang Jr.

He said the group was the only Asian choir to have won the prize to date.

The choir of the World Competition is the Olympics of choral competition. Top winners in five major categories—Mixed Choir, Chamber Choir, All-Male Choir, All-Female Choir and Barbershop Close Harmony Chorus—vie for the much-coveted title.

The UST Singers bagged the top prize in the Mixed Choir category singing "The Second Spem Song" and the Philippine piece, Ruben Fedelesan's "Gabunan," thus qualifying them to compete for the "Choir of the World" title.

The UST Singers bested four other choirs to emerge as champions. The other four were Cymuk Choir of Wales, winner of the Chamber Choir category (the group was Choir of the World in 2005); White Rose Choir of England, winner of Barbershop Close Harmony; Cantabile Choir of Limburg, Germany, winner of the All-Male Choir; and Chamberlin Choir, winner of the All Female Choir.

Then on a four-month concert tour of Europe, the UST Singers had already bagged several top prizes in the international choral circuit before it had joined its April, the group bagged the grand prize at the 57th Tampere International Choral festival in North Ireland, after winning the First Prizes in the Mixed Choir, Madrigal and Sacred Works categories.

In May the choir won the Lady Dorothy Mayer Memorial Trophy and Prize Trophy at the Varlo-Cork International Choral Festival. Months after the choir bagged the Grand Prix au Jeux Festival Choir, after winning three First Prizes, at the 6th International Marches Canto in Enjoy, Poland.

Under Calalang, the UST Singers has made a glorious tradition of consistently winning prizes in the various choral contests, no doubt making it one of the top choirs of the world and the sole unique choir of the Philippines.

The choir has brought much pride and honor in its alma mater, UST, and much more to the country. It has beaten Europeans on their own backyard, so to speak, as choral singing is a Western musical tradition.

Founded in 1962, the UST Singers is a mixed choir composed of students and alumni representing the different colleges and faculties of UST, the oldest and only Pontifical university in Asia, which is gearing for its quadricentennial next year.

To Calalang and the UST Singers, our sincere congratulations!

SINGERS on choral wins

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DANCE REVIEW: Stars of the Russian Ballet

CROWD FAVORITE: "Don Quixote" with Polina Semionova, principal dancer of Deutsche Oper Ballet and Dmitri Gudanov, soloist of Ballet du Capitole de Toulouse

By Margie C. Enriquez
Contributor

IT'S NOT only underwear shows that become season festivals. Medals and chests were profuse at the "Stars of the Russian Ballet" at Aliw Theatre.

Instead of an eyeful of naked hairy, fat audiences enriched with delight at the large glass-like dancing, clean-with-extraordinary fluency and artistry.

"Stars of the Russian Ballet" was organized by Grand Montreal, artistic director of the Dutch cultural group Kunst Fun, and his partner Alexander Zhemlikovsky and Viktoriya Ananyan of the Dutch National Ballet (DNB).

Lisa Maraya, artistic director of Ballet Manila (BM), and husband, ex-partner and media liaison Fred Ebreo hosted the Philippine foray.

It was an evening of suspended leaps, endless turns, feathery footwork and spectacular lifts galore.

We were proud of seeing Filipina dancers presenting original works that highlighted their strengths. There was a dash of repertoire made the audience aware that our choreographers, the late Tony Fabella and Augusto Damian III, were truly world-class.

The 10 Russian dancers were perfectly capable of fireworks. But instead of getting everyone's fancy made wonderful lavishes dancing electrifying with their power and passion. They used subtlety to reveal metaphors that conveyed feelings or ideas instead of indulging for their own sake.

There were moments every time dancers delivered fast multiple pirouettes that climaxed with showstopping endings before pouring on the final bows.

The men also astounded the crowd with the turning bundles that, at their peak, suddenly burst into spins.

The ballerinas were notable for their stratospheric leg extensions, rapid footwork, phenomenal feats of balance and the stunning fountain et morsure (the contorted whipped neck wherein the audience keeps tabs on whether the dancers completed 21 or not.)

Personality and style

Angela Stroina of the Swedish Royal Ballet and the DNB was the crowd favorite. In "Le Corsaire," her movements were etched with sculptured clarity and fluid grace that her partners' gestures were embellished by extra-curative.

A spectacular complement to her polish, but partner, Daniel Kaniecki of Ballet du Capitole de Toulouse, etched the stage with legs hanging for a few seconds in the air in each exhilarating leap.

A variant, Deonisa salvaged off another round of 32 fouetté turns in "Don Quixote" while playing with her fan, changing hands and opening and closing it.

Bolshoi soloist Dmitry Gudanov was another favorite in "Le Ville Mal Gardée," the height of his forward-traveling spin through the air (double saut de basque) was unprecedented. He breezed through the leaps and landings at breakneck angles in "Flames of Paris."

The solo Filipino Marian Segovia impressed the crowd with her deft footwork and speed encompassing the stage.

Bolshoi principal Mikhail Lobukhin and Martinsky soloists Sofia Selitan captivated the audience with their moments earlier than their quietly remarkable dancing in "Romeo and Juliet" and "Giselle."

Anastasia Knoyt of Jacobson's Russian State Ballet and Yury Klevtsov of St. Petersburg Ballet Theater created the look of nobility in "Sleeping Beauty" Pas de Deux. Although it was bland, they made up in "black Swan Pas De Deux."

Leaves was in her element as the preliminary Odile while Mirse looked the part of a native Prince Siegfried.

Real-life partners Zhemlikovsky and Ananyan were in a duel to contemporary works, Fauve van Hamme's "Two Pieces for Her" and K. Pastor's "She Large Roads (One Much Longer)." The themes revolved around the instability of relationships.

Zhemlikovsky and Ananyan were awesome to watch through their intensity and sheer burst of emotions, tempered by classical refinement.

Easy to partner

Isabel Bautista stunned in strength in numbers with Rebollet's "Dancing to Cuerna." It was reminiscent of "Bizabo," a ballet on classroom exercises that climaxed in vermicular dancing, set to Carl Cowley's music.

The fast and busy choreography was a showpiece of BM's corps dancing synchronized triple pirouettes and the male corps swooping to a pause on the floor as a preparation for a beaten jump.

The highlight was Marquez's fast pirouettes, clipped arabesques and lifts. Many dancers have said she's easy to partner because of her control—strength and she needs minimal support.

Bautista's "Reconfigured," a dance combining ballet, modern and ethnic, presented the BM's male corps in full glory—lots of high-flying jumps, turns, floor stamping and vigorous hand movements.

"Tarbel" was Damian's modern version of the famous pas de deux from "Spartacus," the story of a warrior who led a slave revolt against oppressive leaders.

The most famous part to do ballet is the pas de deux between Spartacus and Phrygia, wife of a thetian official. In this duet, Maraya pleaded with the gun-wielding Bautista not to fight.

Bautista put in a surprise element with the strong Maraya carrying the tall Bautista off the floor as he lingered on her back and slid on it. The audience also clapped when the fabled her body in a U-shape and pressed on his crown.

BM dancers Isidro Philippines Dennis Candico Adan and Jean Marie Bautista who had competed in the International Dance Competition in Mississippi. Damian's acrobatic "Evacuation" highlighted Adan's natural gifts and helped him score the silver medal. The dance displayed lots of plunging, running and whirling like mid-wraparounds.

Lope K. Santos' 1906 novel 'Banaag at Sikat' gets the indie-rock treatment

Tanghalang Pilipino's 24th-season opener aims to introduce the pioneering writer and social thinker to a younger audience

By Toni V. De Jesus
Lead Stories

DECADES before the electric guitar and rock music were introduced to the Filipino audience, there was the groundbreaking novel "Banaag at Sikat" by Lope K. Santos. It exposes the breakdown of the traditional Filipino family during the ruling class in the early 1900s and the rise of socialism in the country.

The problem between the two—rock music and the novel—is, in the specific word, "revolutionary." And what a coincidence that in the middle of the unemployed congress of "cuts" at the Tanghalang Manuel Antonio of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, literally under its ground, is at the Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino, will be the 2010s run of "Banaag at Sikat, Isang Rock Musical" by Tanghalang Pilipino (come and happen).

THE MAIN cast of Tanghalang Pilipino's "Banaag at Sikat," opening Aug. 18 at CCP Little Theater

The unprofessional leader of the resistance is Fernando "Tess Maulit" Josef, theater director of "Ili" who conceptualized the idea of adapting the classic novel initially into a zarzuela sometime in 2005.

Back then, Josef was CCP's artistic director and vice-president, and one of his major thrust was to come up with new ideas for the classic and outreach programs. The CCP's hands are involved in the "arts for the people" campaign. He had only one note in mind to "decode"—Lope K. Santos' 1906 century Tagalog. He assumed to adapt Santos' work into a musical play that today's young audience could relate to, emotional and otherwise.

Enter the well-respected literature professor-poet-novelist-theater-critic Lamberto, who took on the daunting task of transposing "Banaag at Sikat" to the stage. The result took three years.

Says Josef: "But, sana nagsimula in 2008. Nasa kalagitnaan ko lamang hinasa ng isang buwan sa Davao just to finish the libretto. But there were creative differences between me and Lamberto, so I had to do further projects at the Malaysian Conservatory for Culture and the Arts in Genting, one of his dream projects, previously offered part of his grant to the "Banaag at Sikat" project.

National Artist for Production Design Salvador "Badong" Bernal was also invited to do the production design. "Banaag at Sikat, isang Rock Musical" is now the opening salvo of TPI's 24th season, "which focuses on the works of our National Artists," says Josef in a recent press con at Milky Way Restaurant in Makati City.

Biggest hurdle

About the novel, Lamberto says: "Honestly, I wasn't enamored to anyone to read the novel outright. It's truly a problem understanding the works of Lope K. Santos. His Tagalog is not what a batang used now. It's the reason young people have not been reading 'Banaag at Sikat.' I came from a generation of writers whose Tagalog is as modern as the 1970s up to the '80s. But Santos' novel itself was published in 1906."

While in the process of adaptation, Lamberto said his biggest hurdle was "the polemics of the characters." For example, the free rank leads spout a lot of time-disvarying socialism and anarchism.

Philippine society at the start of the 20th century saw the rising conflicts between the ruling class and the working class. There was the impending disintegration of the old rich and the rise of nga mayayaman (the educated peninsulars, laborers, farmers)," said Lamberto.

"That's why the staging of 'Banaag at Sikat' is still relevant to what's happening now. In the end, it's the story that matters, not the language," he added.

Bent to bring the material to the stage to note the work of director Jose Estrella and composer Lucien Letaba.

"There's something about the text that needed to be penetrated. But at the same time, I need to be conservative," said Estrella, who at one it's impossible to adapt the novel in its entirety since it would take five hours long.

"Then, needed to cause it out. The rhythm of the music is really very nice. Staging-wise, there are many

and on touches. When we adapt a certain scene, it's not the movie prints on the whole house. It depends on the director. It's still a work in progress. We're still trying to determine how to make it truly exist in the exact pulled audience. Hopefully, it would take two and a half hours only."

Letaba and Lamberto earlier collaborated on "Hibik, el Pinoy-pride musical Florante Laforet," a musical for Dulaang UP in 2002.

Letaba described "Banaag at Sikat" his 35th musical, as more challenging than a normal.

"I am more careful with the music because it's rock music and the language is modern Tagalog. All in all, it's mostly good material, and I think its there is the best lyricist I've ever worked with."

"We've decided it should be indie rock—the band used young people of today listen to," he added. "It's not merely 1970s or 1980s rock. But rather all of them."

Powerhouse cast

Performing in the show and singing the Letaba-Lamberto compositions are a powerhouse cast of musical-theater artists.

Aces Bhagi Lazard plays Hilwal, the female lead, daughter of equalist Don Ramon Miranda, played by veteran theater actor Jerry de Leon. Al Guinsatao is Delfin, the progressive post-graduate advocating for socialism, and Lakbay native of Hilwal.

Rueben Centenera and Arlan recalls alternate to Felipe, the love-triangle of Delfin. Felipe's romance-lure wife, Inang, is played alternately by Angeli Bayani and Raquel Meller.

Irene Bhagi Lazard's real-life husband Francis plays Rupetto, the young man from abroad who falls in love with Felipe's youngest sister Marcela (Tina Ledesma). Dodo Lobang is played alternately by Clarice Lacsamana and Jenny Lyn Mendoza, while Raymund Reblora, Shug Cabrera, Martin Guinto, Jonathan Tadioan and Pilli Bravo-Ines, all of the TP Actors' Company will play the other roles.

"Banaag at Sikat" runs Aug. 18-29, with 8 p.m. performances every Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday; 5 p.m. shows every Friday, Saturday and Sunday, at the Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino (CCP Little Theater). Special performances available upon reservation. For inquiries, call 832-1125 loc. 1629 to 1631, 8832-1965 or 832-3661. E-mail cpintapbox@yahoo.com or visit www.tanghalangpilipino.com.

FROM BOOK TO FILM

Robert Harris' 'The Ghost Writer' now a Roman Polanski thriller

THE TOAST of the 2010 Berlin Film Festival where it won the Golden Bear prize for directing, Roman Polanski's latest film, "The Ghost Writer," is a terse, political thriller adapted from the best-selling novel "The Ghost" by Robert Harris (perhaps best known for his seminal alternate history book "Fatherland").

Prior to becoming a successful novelist, Harris has been a television correspondent with the BBC and a newspaper columnist for the London Sunday Times and The Daily Telegraph. His novels (including "Enigma" and "Pompeii") have sold more than ten million copies and have been translated into 30 languages. His novel "The Ghost Writer," Harris's first for the time, adapted his new book into a screenplay, working closely with Polanski throughout the process.

In the film, when the eponymous writer (name only as The Ghost (Ewan McGregor) agrees to complete the memoirs of former British Prime Minister Adam Lang (Pierce Brosnan), he agrees against his better judgment. He is the opportunistic of a lifetime. But the project seems cursed from the start, as the writer before its predecessor on the project, jump's long-term aide, died in an unfortunate accident.

The Pierce Brosnan character seems to be a very thinly fictionalized version of Tony Blair. What led you to tell this story and to tell it this way?

Polanski: Well, first of all I was interested in the relationship between a ghost writer and a politician, and I wanted to write that 35 years ago. The idea of someone who could only function as a writer by pretending to be someone else suggested a curious kind of character to me, just as a politician who lost power also suggested a kind of character. It didn't start out being all about Blair, but I couldn't find the character to the setting for this story until in 2008 when there were reports about Blair possibly being taken to the war crimes court and having to go live in America where he couldn't be extradited, and that gave me the element of the plot and the location.

There was, obviously, resemblances. And I did become fascinated by the transformation that came over Tony Blair, the way he seemed to become more and more isolated and cut off. And actually his rather curious attitude toward George W. Bush and the way he voted along with what Bush wanted to do, almost as if he had been elected by the Republican Party rather than the British Labour Party. Why? The transformation baffled into my head of Maybe he had been recruited by the CIA, and so the entire history element of the story came into it as well.

The film's surprisingly funny in parts. When you were working on it, how much of The sense of humor was on the page and how much was Brosnan bringing his own touches to it?

Ewan McGregor

Almost every line of dialogue from the movie is from the novel. I wrote the novel with Hitchcock in mind, particularly "Strangers on a Train" and "Rear Window." But as you proceed, story-to-film, it's a difficult thing to pull off, the mixture of comedy and fear—they don't normally mix well—but Hitchcock managed it. I tried to set it in that sort of quiet suburbia [near Dover], and then Roman added little visual touches like the guy wrapping up the leaves and [the] sort of thing. So, I suppose, in terms of performance, it was quite deliberate.

Polanski's current situation is going to dominate much of what is discussed about the film. Having your director and up to jail during post—how did this affect you guys?

It's difficult for him to [actually] because my work was done. I saw a rough cut with Roman in Paris in the beginning of September and he was arrested at the end of September, and in those three weeks he pretty well made the adjustments he wanted and that he needed in the rough cut. He actually finished it, in fact, just before he left for the ill-fated trip to Zurich.

"The Ghost Writer" will be shown exclusively at Ayala Malls Cinemas—Glorietta 4 & Greenbelt 3—starting Aug. 4.

The cellist in between Schumann and fatherhood

By Pablo A. Tariman
Lead Stylist

HONG KONG—Cao, the young cellist who received a standing ovation for his Dvorak cello concerto with the Manila Philharmonic under Isidel Cal, recent, is now a father. He's married to Taiwanese pianist-wife Yi-Hsin Yu with whom he had a memorable musical collaboration at the Francisco Guinigundo Hall two years ago.

A soloist of the Manila Symphony, in a Schumann cello concerto which he is playing for the first time with orchestra (Aug. 21, 8 p.m. at the Philharmonic Theater). Cao is indeed in a transition already with the birth of his daughter, Veronica Magdalena.

Of the record, he has just finished a doctorate degree and moved to Taiwan.

Says he: "All of these took place within pretty much a year, so I guess I must say it's kind of hectic[ed]. But I like the change since it presents new challenges in life. Now I am mostly busier teaching. I get to know more musicians in Taiwan as I am also asked to collaborate with many of them. Since the Philippines is so close to Taiwan, I can watch to be able to come back more often and collaborate with Filipino musicians."

This is actually his proper debut with HKSO, with whose youngest members he had played Mahler's "Gesellen" on TV when he was in high school, and the first movement of the Haydn concerto—also for two of the Hayd is concerto competition years ago.

He describes the challenge and nature of the Schumann cello concerto: "Compared to other well-known cello concertos (Dvorak and Elgar), Schumann's cello concerto was always considered by orchestral critics. Unlike Dvorak concerto where the orchestra parts is much more of a symphonic work in itself, Schumann's orchestration is much more sparse. Because of this, there was an attempt by the Russian composer

David Shostakovich to re-orchestrate the concerto to make it a bit fuller.

"From my opinion, though, Schumann's orchestration is quite perfect since it has a much more "chamber music" feel, which makes it more intimate. That in itself, I think, is a challenge compared to other ensembles. I feel that I should know not only the details of the cello part, but also the orchestral part. I think the ensemble's appeal comes from the beautiful long lines of the melody, and especially the conversation of the solo cello with another cellist in the second movement.

"I think the transition was difficult in the early stages when our baby was just newly born. I do remember studying and performing with only a couple of hours of sleep. But other than that, managing to much more about balancing my schedule, setting priorities, and also not overbooking myself with performances as a particular time. Just rather a more spread-out schedule."

Like athletes

Described by the late environmentalist and poet patron Odette Abrantes as the sound's answer to Yo Yo Ma, Cao is only starting in shape to mature.

"I think it's only to be in shape when you always have some performances scheduled ahead of you," he says. "Like athletes, musicians should also pace themselves prior to their engagements, depending on the demand of each performance. Now that I look more, I have more chance to analyze the students' technical problems. Hence, I am more conscious of the time and attention which my own playing. In terms of musicianship, I get to review a lot of my previous pieces, have a different look on it, and re-discover new possibilities with them."

He describes how it is like being married to another musician.

"Since I come from a family of musicians, it is pretty comforting and easy to simply like adding another instrument to an orchestra. Of course, I feel quite lucky to also be able to collaborate with my wife, and we look forward to sharing our music together with other people. My wife is much more of a perfectionist than I am, so I guess that's what I'm trying to match."

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At it opens its 500th store at Elliptical Road corner Quezon Ave. in Quezon City 7-Eleven celebrates not only this newest addition to its expanding family but a milestone in giving us Filipinos unparalleled service. From its first store here in the Philippines, it has established its presence in the hearts and minds of every urbanite. Thanks to its strategic branches near offices, pedestrian-heavy city locations, as well as key provincial areas all over Luzon, it might not be far-fetched to say that 7-Eleven has even become synonymous to convenience for us, what with its round-the-clock service and accessibility to us wherever we are in the city. With 500 stores and counting, 7-Eleven continues to stay true to their vision to provide modern convenience to more Filipinos.

Being Socially-Relevant is a 24/7 Job

Acknowledging the tremendous support everyone has given to their convenience store, 7-Eleven believes that giving back to society is one of the best ways to share its blessings. Through the 7Eleven Foundation, 7-Eleven has helped build a classroom for kindergarten students in Capitale St. Francisco Elementary School in Pateros, which was turned over last July 9. The expansion also brought joy to more children by treating Barrio Fiesta kids to a fun-filled day touring Eleven Pantheon and Ocean Park last July 10.

Apart from these community-building activities, 7-Eleven also encouraged Filipinos to go out and vote with their fun and crowd 7-Eleven campaign, which transformed their popular Slurp® cups to bear the color and image of the leading presidential candidates for the May 2010 elections. Through these cups, people were able to participate in a simulated election by choosing their presidentiables cups - with votes tabulated online. And this coming August 8, for its 500th store milestone, 7-Eleven launches the Tour 500 - a 40-km bike ride from Alabang in Tagaytay with a grand prize of P25,000 to be donated to the winner's charity organization of choice.

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Convenience at every turn: A 7-Eleven at Cubao, NLEX, San Fernando, Pampanga.

The 7Eleven Foundation donates a classroom for the kindergarten students of Capitale St. Francisco Elementary School in Pateros.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Bernie G. Velarde

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Kris annoyed by faux rumor

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
and Emmie G. Velarde

KRIS AQUINO had laughed off the gossip rumor-mongers, but friend Boy Abunda told Inquirer.net, "Inis-dis was a bit irritated."

Abunda said Aquino, who came home on Friday from a three-week vacation in the United States, wondered how the rumor started.

Once possibility, Abunda offered, was Aquino's new advocacy: Do campaigns against cervical cancer. Her participation required a visit to obtain some gynecological

But not with Polwang, who seems to be the big audience favorite in the new noontime game show, 'Win na Win'

KRIS Aquino

Gag Dayardin for some scoop: maybe she was sighted at the clinic. Abunda added, "He also said Aquino kept a detailed chart of her menstrual cycle and that, on July 31, while in Orlando, Florida, with sons Josh and Bimby, she got her monthly period.

Abunda met Aquino at the set, just early morning, and she gave him a long interview that covered the pregnancy rumor. The interview was to be aired on at least four Kapamilya shows: "The Buzz," "ASAP," "Entertainment Live" and "TV Patrol."

Polwang!

Later that day, Aquino joined her cohosts in their first rehearsal for the new ABS-CBN daily noontime game show that replaced "Pinoy Henyo."

"Pilipinas Win na Win" premiered on Saturday, with Aquino seemingly working harder than ever (more hyper kasi, since she mostly shared the screen with three hyperactive colleagues who had their comedy routine down pat.

Refreshingly, Polwang, Bianca King, Rhian Ramos and Valeen Montenegro gave Aquino no-defense-for-it treatment and interacted with her as they would one another. Just one of the guys. Whether or not this sits well with Aquino should be apparent in the next few days.

For the meantime, deliberately to keep the atmosphere charged with public curiosity, Aquino has vowed never to snatch from Rodriguez the only man in her heart, Robin Padilla.

Aquino to Padilla's ex-girlfriend, Rodriguez is currently being linked to Padilla.

Aquino told Abunda: "I can say with certainty that nothing will happen between Robin and me, Robin and Mariel are so in love with each other."

Text buddies

A source told Inquirer that Padilla and Aquino had been "texting" back and forth between the Friday telecasts.

Abunda was seen as reporting that Aquino and Padilla would receive P1 million a day as endorser fee for the new show. "Kris has a contract with ABS-CBN," Abunda explained. "It is possible to amend that contract, but I am not privy to those details. That side of her career is handled by Cory Bautista. I take care of her endorsements."

When Aquino arrived for "Win na Win" rehearsal on Friday, Padilla was having a haircut, said the source.

The same source added, "Polwang and Mariel cried realizing how the host friends them. 'Kris na lang. Don't call me Ate.'"

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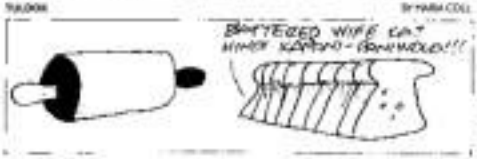

BEN

By DANIEL SHELTON

KISS MACHINE

By HANS ARREN

SHERMAN'S LAGOON

By JIM TOOMEY

HOROSCOPE

By FRANCES DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY You have a love of adventure and a thirst for knowledge. All of your personality and motivations are to your advantage, but others are intimidated by your brilliance and may feel inferior in your presence. You have a gentle, confident style that makes you appear more attractive. You're focused, but at the same time, you're relaxed and easy to talk to. You are a powerful communicator who is destined to be a leader.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You're focused on your finances and plans for improvements to boost your earnings for the future. Money moves (Mercury in retrograde) until (9). **TAURUS (April 20 to May 20)** Between the Moon in (1 also) opposite, you might feel more emotional than usual. Events on the weekend could lead to a romantic encounter. **GEMINI (May 21 to June 20)** Your energy is a bit low today. You should relax. This is why you are more inclined to do anything alone or behind the scenes. (3) and today's moon. **CANCER (June 21 to July 22)** Conversations in group settings will go well today, especially with females. Others are sympathetic to your point of view, and they are interested in your ideas for the future.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Conversations about your personal life suddenly might prove to hold value, especially with females, which could lead to a new romance. **VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22)** Try to do something different today. Even then, you work alternately and accidentally. Furthermore, you want to do something new. Therefore, your decision of the evening!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) You have a greater than-average interest in sports, food and the wealth and possessions of others today, especially your partner's. Discussions could lead to possible advantages that might affect you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) It looks like there is a possible love affair which means you have to go more than halfway when dealing with others. Your con... issues aside, others will honor or more than halfway when dealing with you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) This is an ideal day to work in little errands and get a head things done. Conversations will relate to your life. You want to feel like you are on top of things.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) What a useful day! Educators, librarians, lecturers, sports, children's activities, the theater, movies and parties. It's your favorite love fun!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) Minimize family and domestic issues as your focus today. A conversation with a female relative sparkles. Minor setbacks are significant.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) A new day! Short trips, errands, buying and selling, and attending and dealing keep you on the go. It's a good day to talk to siblings and relatives.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Concepts Sudoku — By Thor Davis

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			3				1	5
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	1	8	6		3			
6								7
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Difficulty Level ●

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Singson's exes mum about drug charges

Rik, the charming ex of **Ronald Singson**—with whom he has a 2-year-old boy child, **Samantha Agadia**—would rather not comment about the Baron. Sir's supposedly alleged drug-fuelled fling cries in Hong Kong. The ex-couple have remained good friends and Ronald gives Dara baby-bill support.

I haven't met Rik. But based on his pictures, I must say that she's my standard. Her exes only 'C' when she and Ronald were together. Their romance lasted four years.

Ronald was also linked to **Angela de Leon** and **Mae Tydee**, among other celebrities.

I thought Ronald's only vice was women. Never knew he was into drugs. Or is he just a fall guy? He should have chosen the lesser evil.

Another ex?

At press time, Pronalds isn't GF **Lovi Poe**, amidst rumblings about his successful ex.

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Anne Carvajal

Maybe she just doesn't want to get dragged into the mess.

Could it be Jake Cuenca is still using Ronald's van? That's his right as his GF but she should also not forget her duty to give Ronald the moral support he badly needs right now.

Lavish gift

Dyan Alcantara blushed when I asked about the lavish gift he got from his honey **Regine Velasquez**.

"She gets embarrassed when that subject is brought up," he said. "I also discover her wills expensive presents. Maldalas ng cr! I don't look at the price tag. Pikit-mata ko na lang kinuha (laughs). We are taking a trip on my birthday because we haven't had quality time in months. It will also be the perfect time to finalize plans for our long overdue wedding."

The happiness of the groom is in full bloom.

Back on track

Ara Mina is back in full swing after her debut in the electorate. It only goes to show that the hiatus seem to show hit them for the worst.

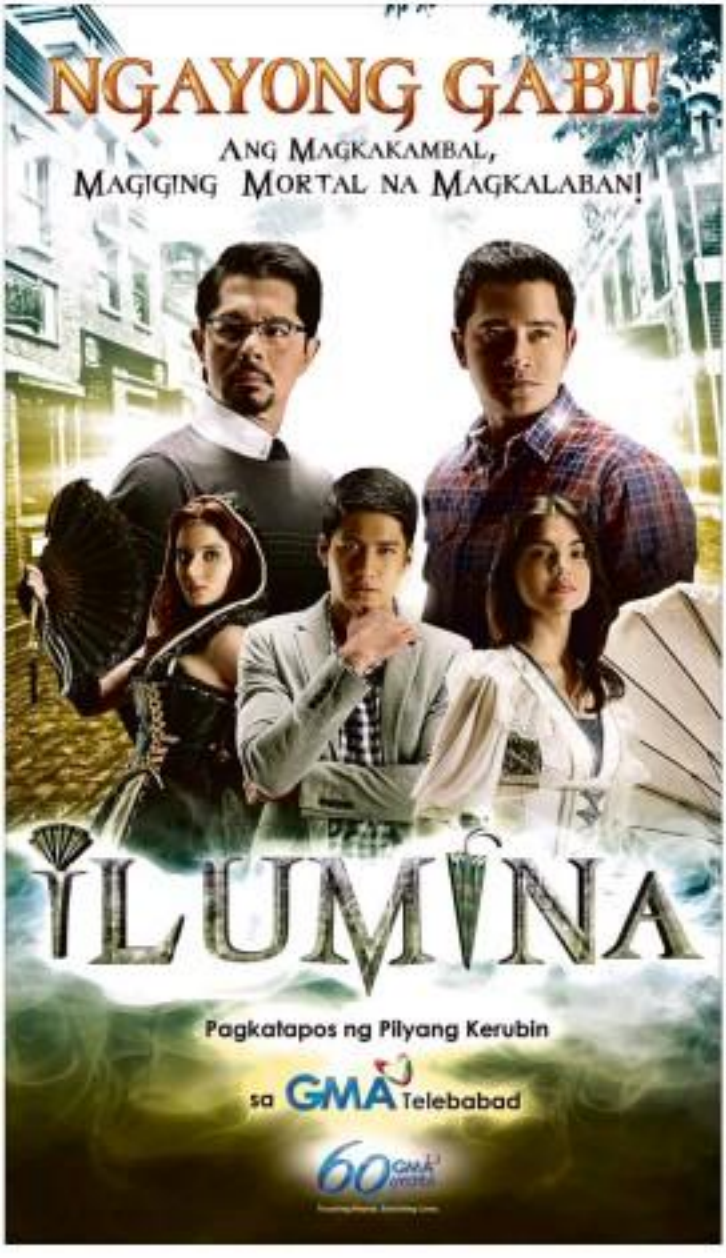
She plays Sika, the wife of **Gene Montano**, in GMA 7's newest drama-fantasy series, "Bantatay" (premiere tonight on the Telebabad block). Gene portrays Ponsiano, a simple farmer who accidentally finds himself amidst the power struggle of the white and black sorcerers.

Little do they know that the search of the sorcerers for the elusive Bantay Book of Magic could unravel into the lives and loves of their own children—the newly conjoined twins Patrizia (**Pilar Ramos**) and Jessica (**Jackie Rice**).

If Ara [and] acquired powers from Bantatay, what would she change in her life? "I'd like to be a wholesome role model," Tyrone **Ara Mina** says. I have story and feel good inside," she said. "I [had] a magic wand, I'd make the perfect partner for my mom to come into her life. Not only mine and family also to [the] whole world. Para pati ako ay [may] happiness rays."

What advice does she get for us **Cristine Reyes** about her budding romance with **Rayver Cruz**? "Secretive a Cristine as I don't know the real score between them," said Ara. "Alam ko kung mayroon silang [sa] They should just make their time [and] kung para [ba] sa isang tao pala [ay] para sa isa't isa."

With reports from Ronald Carvajal



CMAI Heaven and Bridget Regan in "Legend of the Seeker"

Sword, sorcery, and 'The Seeker'

By Oliver M. Palumbaan
Chief Scholar

ASWORD-WIELDING hero inspires a rebellion against a tyrannical tyrant in "Legend of the Seeker," inspired by Terry Goodkind's "Sword of Truth" fantasy books. Like many a fantasy heroes, humble fictional Cypher (Craig Horner) is unaware of his importance until he finds himself in a life-changing encounter with the dreaded Charm Sanna. Accepting his destiny and duties as the Seeker of Truth, Richard enlists seven fellow fighters to overthrow the merciless ruler Darken Rahl (Craig Parker).

The fantasy drama introduces a realm visually influenced by medieval Europe, with fictitious locales like farming villages, solid wood lands, and cities cracked by twelve successive wars.

However, it's not all sweet a [illegible] tangible would become of some unconnecting of from or simplistic in signs. Still, every episode sees Horner's incredible

CLICK!

when the fantasy element is introduced. Richard and his allies need [illegible] and other figures during their travels and get more dramatic perspectives of the realm affecting regular people.

The two-season "Legend of the Seeker" is mostly serious. Richard's adventures get dark and violent occasionally, but it's not entirely humorless. And while the many villains is pretty two-dimensional, the Richard-led Seeker and his Sword of destined, sometimes-volatile rebels more than make up for it.

Richard Cypher is a generic hero—noble and selfless—but the rest of the seven, different sides to the characters are explored. He sometimes falters and succumbs to temptations caused by magic. Darken more varied sides, the comic-relief Zedd (Bruce Spence) and the wise sorceress Zeddicus (Nina Sosanya) complement him.

The fight scenes are very stylish choreographed and consistently awe-inspiring. Almost every episode, the small group is thrown fighting together. But Seeker expertly swings his Sword of Truth, Rahlan gracefully defends [illegible] using a pair of daggers, and Zeddicus blasts his enemies with mighty magic bolts.

"Epic scenes just [illegible] with the inclusion of Gary Tiffany Bothell], a sorceress dominatrix from the all-female Mord-Sith order, to the second season.

"Legend of the Seeker" airs Wednesdays, 8 p.m. on Studio 23 and Fridays, 9 p.m. on Jack TV.

'High School Confidential'

Sharon Lane, a filmmaker who found high school difficult and unrewarding, decided to document her daughter and a group of peers as they went through the ups and downs of high school life.

Filmed over four years the result of Lane's efforts is the past documentary past reality show "High School Confidential" airs] weekdays starting today at 5 p.m. on ETC.

ENTERTAINMENT

ELIZABETH Hayden (center) with Eva Longoria Parker and producer Ryan Kavanaugh

PDI man again a director of H'wood press group

PHILIP Medi, president of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA), is reelected to a fourth term. Medi, the Philippine Daily Inquirer's Los Angeles correspondent and entertainment columnist ("Daily in Hollywood"),

In the star-studded event held at the Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills, Medi and actress Eva Longoria Parker also announced HFPA's record $1,341,000 in financial grants to entertainment-related charities, scholarship programs and nonprofit organizations. Each year, the group of inter-

P10-11

Asian film leaders meet in Manila

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

IN THEIR DIVERSE cultures, they found commonalities.

Film commissioners from all over Asia met in Manila recently to discuss vital issues affecting the movie industries in their respective countries.

Hosted by the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP), the meeting of the Asian Film Commissioners' Network (AFCNet) was held for three days in June.

Seven delegates from five countries discussed such urgent issues as censorship, dwindling audience patronage due to Hollywood influx, and lack of funds, marketing support and incentives, among others.

"Although we are competitors, we share common problems and can help each other find solutions," said Philippine representative Digna H. Santiago, executive director of the Philippine Film Export Services Office which is under the FDCP.

"This meeting is an important step in making the Philippines a shooting venue for foreign productions. The event shows that the Philippines is considered a major player among film commissioners in Asia," said Rolando S. Antonio, FDCP head.

Among the AFCNet board members present at the meeting were president Park Kwang Su (Busan Film Commission director) and Kim Soo-ah (Korea), Debasish Sahlineli (director of the Bali Film Office, Indonesia), Rahayuli Rahman (senior executive of Multimedia Development Corporation, Malaysia), and Yoshihiko Inoue (director of the Sapporo-Hokkaido Convention Strategy Organization, Japan).

Multiplier effect

"We learned from the Indonesian delegate that their film industry doesn't get support from their government, but the film 'Laskar Pelangi' and 'Ayat, Pray, Love' was shot in Bali," noted Santiago.

Alleviating big budget foreign productions has a "multiplier effect on, and can contribute millions of dollars to, the local economy," Santiago added.

He reported that Christopher

STORY: C1

Censorship, dwindling audiences mulled

REAL HAIR. REAL RESULTS. NO GIMMICKS.

SNAPPED!

Sight for sore eyes, this one

TALK about refreshing. News analyst and public service practitioner Vicky Morales twirled by as we watched President Noynoy Aquino slowly make his way to the mike. He had delivered a short speech for EMA 7's 60th-anniversary party at the Rizal Ballroom of Shangri-la Makati. All eyes were on the video wall... except ours, after we caught the sight of Vicky very pregnant and waiting; a silky paisley print number that fit her familiar form. More pics, page 18A.

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6 GHOST HOUSE
7 DINGO
8 HALIK SA TUBIG
9 HATING KAPATID
10 SALT

MANILA

1 GHOST HOUSE
2 SALT
3 THE LAST AIRBENDER (Digital 3D)
4 THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE
5 THE LAST AIRBENDER
6 INCEPTION
7 HATING KAPATID

METRO EAST

1 RESERVE
2 THE LAST AIRBENDER (Digital 3D)
3 SALT
4 SALT
5 INCEPTION
6 THE LAST AIRBENDER
7 THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE
8 HATING KAPATID

NOVALICHES

1 THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE
2 HATING KAPATID
3 SALT
4 THE LAST AIRBENDER

FORUM ROBINSONS

1 THE LAST AIRBENDER (Digital 3D)
2 GHOST HOUSE
3 SALT
4 HATING KAPATID / THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE

STA. ROSA

1 SALT
2 INCEPTION
3 THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE
4 DINGO
5 HATING KAPATID

LIPA

1 THE LAST AIRBENDER (Digital 3D)
2 SALT
3 INCEPTION
4 DINGO
5 HATING KAPATID

DASMARIÑAS

1 THE LAST AIRBENDER
2 THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE
3 SALT
4 HATING KAPATID

STARMILLS

1 THE LAST AIRBENDER (Digital 3D)
2 SALT
3 DINGO
4 INCEPTION
5 HATING KAPATID
6 THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE

IMUS

1 THE LAST AIRBENDER
2 THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE
3 SALT
4 HATING KAPATID

ANGELES

1 SALT
2 HATING KAPATID
3 THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE
4 THE LAST AIRBENDER

TAGUIGAN

1 SALT
2 HATING KAPATID
3 THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE / MAMMADUKE / SEX AND THE CITY 2

DUMAGUETE

1 SALT
2 HATING KAPATID
3 MAMMADUKE / SEX AND THE CITY 2

BACOLOD

1 THE LAST AIRBENDER (Digital 3D)
2 DINGO
3 SALT
4 THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE
5 INCEPTION
6 HATING KAPATID

ILOILO

1 THE LAST AIRBENDER (Digital 3D)
2 HATING KAPATID
3 THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE
4 SALT
5 DINGO
6 INCEPTION

GENSAN

1 THE LAST AIRBENDER (Digital 3D)
2 HATING KAPATID
3 SALT
4 MAMMADUKE / INCEPTION

ILOCOS NORTE

1 SALT
2 MAMMADUKE / SEX AND THE CITY 2
3 HATING KAPATID

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD

Peas' 'I Gotta Feeling' hits 6M download mark

NEW YORK—The Black Eyed Peas have more proof of the ubiquity of "I Gotta Feeling." Their No. 1 hit has become the first song to reach the six million mark in digital downloads.

The milestone was announced Friday and confirmed by Nielsen SoundScan, for the group's leader, will.i.am, the moment a about much more than the song.

"We came out in '98 and our career, if you would look at it on chart, there's no dips in it," he said in a phone interview. Thursday. "For our career to still be breaking and release and doing things like six million downloads, it's pretty significant."

It's also significant, he said, in a time when illegal downloading is the norm.

"That means that they chose to support the group, support the art," he said. "God knows how many people listened to it online and didn't buy it, downloaded it for free and didn't think about it."

AP

PDI man again a director . . .

From page 01

national journalists holds one of the most anointed awards shown on television, which has watched 10Wh to choose more than 41.2 million to worthy causes in the past decade.

among the stars who delivered acceptance remarks on behalf of the giants were Nicole Kidman (The Film Foundation), Jane Lynch (Outfest), Matthew Bin (American Cinematheque), Lorraine Gilbreal Center and Louis American Cinematics), Annette Bening (Sundance Institute), Ryan Phillippe (Film Aid International), John Shirley (UCLA), Aaron Sorkin (higher education & fellowships and institutional support grants), Bryan Cranston (professional training and mentoring grants), Carla Gugino (LA Conservancy), MOMA, UC Berkeley's Pacific Film Archive, USC/IMA and other film culture, history and preservation grants), and Jim Sheerin and Kaley Cuoco (pre-professional training and education grants).

"I am proud of this philanthropic dance of the organization," Siguion said of the grants, which included a donation to the Coalition of Asian Pacific in Entertainment. 10-10's international philanthropic efforts have been recognized by history, which gave the annual Star Award for Excellence in the West award in 2008. The reelected 10Wh officers are Hon J. Ignacio (vice president), Mirbet Yatsa (executive secretary), and Jack Trachtenberg (treasurer). Siguion was reelected to the board of directors, which includes Ali Isa, Jorge Camara, Yoram Kahana, Theo Ringma and Lourdes Sota.

Siguion, the first Filipino member to the group's more than 60 year history is an alumnus of the faculty of Arts and Letters of the University of Santo Tomas (UST). He was one of the outstanding alumni who received the inaugural All Guanzon Awards in this field at UST last March. His column appears every Friday, Saturday and Sunday in the business.

Siguion lives in Los Angeles with his wife Anne Sears B. Siguion, also a journalist and an 10Wh member. They have two children, Simon Pilarde 2006) and Rafaella Angeles (Ella).

Asian film leaders . . .

From page 01

Bertuga's "Identity Snap," a big French production, was recently shot in Cebu, while US indie filmmaker John Taylor "Amigo," which won the audience award at its at the San Sebastian Film Festival, was shot entirely in Bohol.

An organization of professional film commission and production service companies in the Asia/Pacific region, the APFM has made it a point to "disseminate information ... to help each member country attract foreign productions in their area."

Marketing blitz

Poh suggested a "marketing campaign" that will coincide with the organization's 10th anniversary in 2011.

Poh described it as a "collective project" that would address obstacles to the growth of the Asian film industry.

The members decided to publish a compilation, inspired by the films "Save Pink, I Love You" and "Paris, Je T'aime." The collaborate will consist of Asian short stories that will showcase each country's unique dreaming and creative sites.

Poh also announced that "co-production" will be the main topic at the next Asia Film Policy Forum, to be held during the Pusan Film Festival on Oct. 13 and 15. It's the third time for the Asia Film Policy Forum to be held within the Busan International Film Commission and Industry Showcase.

POWER PLANT CINEMA

THE LAST AIRBENDER - 3D 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 7:30, 10:10

SALT - PG13 12:00, 2:40, 5:30, 7:50, 8:20

SALT - PG13 1:30, 3:45, 8:00, 8:10, 10:30

INCEPTION (In 3D) - PG13 12:20, 3:20, 6:30, 9:30

THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE/ INCEPTION - G/PG13 12:40, 3:00, 5:10, 7:30, 10:30

THE LAST AIRBENDER (In 3D) - G 12:00, 2:00, 5:15, 7:25, 9:40

MOVIES & CINEMA LINE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SHANG CINEPLEX

1) THE LAST AIRBENDER (3D) (SP) 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00

2) SALT (PG-13) 12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30

3) INCEPTION (PG-13) 12:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30

4) SALT (PG-13) 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00

THE LAST AIRBENDER (SP) 2:30, 4:00, 7:15, 9:30

Another University Entrance Information in the Making!

Shang Cineplex Mall, 3rd Level, Shang Mall, Mandaluyong City

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

Now Showing

1 SALT (PG-13) 2 SALT (PG-13) 12:00, 2:40, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30 3 THE LAST AIRBENDER (3D) (PG) 2:00, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10

4 INCEPTION (PG-13) 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 Dolby Digital Cinema 6

5 SALT (PG-13) 12:45, 2:50, 4:55, 7:00, 9:05 STADIUM 7

Eastwood Cinema 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Location at 4th Level Eastwood Cityscape 2, Eastwood Cinema 6, 7, Location at 5th Level Eastwood Cityscape 2

NOW SHOWING

GREENHILLS CINEMAS

THEATRE-MART

PROMENADE

1 2 3 4 5

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

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OPENS AUG. 4

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TEKKEN

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WHO WILL BE THE LAST MAN STANDING?

NINA WILLIAMS FIGHTING STYLE: Kenpo Shaw Martial Arts, Assassination Techniques & Attack

ANNA WILLIAMS FIGHTING STYLE: Kenpo Shaw Martial Arts, Assassination Techniques & Attack

BRYAN FURY FIGHTING STYLE: Kenpo Shaw Martial Arts, Assassination Techniques & Attack

YOSHIMITSU FIGHTING STYLE: Ninja Arts

JIN KAZAMA FIGHTING STYLE: Advanced Ninjutsu, Style Karate and Kazama Style Traditional Martial Arts

EDDY GORDO FIGHTING STYLE: Capoeira, Martial Art Characterized by Lethal Acrobatic Movements and Distinctive Kicks

RAVEN FIGHTING STYLE: Advanced Taekwondo Arts and Extremely Deadly Kicks

P-Noy 'extremely grateful' to Kapuso network

By the Entertainment staff

THE EVENING BEFORE NEWS OF media perhaps being "sliced" by Malacañang's perceived bias for ABS-CBN, President Noynoy Aquino was in GMA-7's grand 60th anniversary bash at the Okada in Manila, sensing network officials of his administration and supporters (birds sense?).

"It was, after all, the only TV station that received his commendation of my dad, Benigno S. Aquino Jr., and his historic wake and funeral," P-Noy said in his remarks as guest of honor. "It was also the TV station where my sister, former President Corazon C. Aquino, made her television debut on Aug. 21, 1994...For this, and for your courage in delivering the news for our people, I am extremely grateful."

"But extremely grateful" should not be, or, as one's GMA-7, if not all media orgs.

Kapuso stars—dressing, shimmering up—lent glitter to the event. Pat snapped some of them for this Pardon's edition.

KAPUSO stars came out during the network's big bash on Friday (from left) Geoff Eigenmann and Carla Abellana, Dennis Trillo, Dingdong Dantes and Marian Rivera. Likewise very visible during the party were Iza Calzado and Mike Enriquez. CHRIS MACIAS

KIM Rusmo, star snapped with friends at the GMA 7 party.

WENDELL Ramos came solo.

Almost his bride

In the latest issue of Startbucks, ABS-CBN's hot mag, cover boy Bobby Pedilla reveals that he almost married Vina Morales, his leading lady many years ago in "Blood Strong Heartbeat."

"We almost ended up married," Bobby says. "Ikaw Lilwel pa pregnant. My mother (Eva) had sought Vina's family's consent. I had told Bora Vic (Del Rosario), 13and many of borrowing money for the wedding because I was broke at the time."

Bobby says Vina is not going to be mad to Lionel's ears.

Gone at 41

Miguel V. Pelaez III, Lav Diaz's cinematography for the celebrated movie, "Batang West Side," died Friday morning after a massive heart attack. He was battling 42 on Sept. 17.

"He was known for had a heart problem," said first cousin Luigi Pelaez, special projects adviser of the Film Development Council of the Philippines.

"Pelaez" died at 8 a.m. and was cremated at 2 p.m. on the same day. On Saturday, a 10 a.m. mass in Signal Mass was held at the St. Alphonsa de Liguori in Magallanes, Makati City, where his ashes are now kept.

"He was a great guy. He's one of us here," Diaz told Inquirer on Friday.

Long-term plan

Zsuzsa Bánszky returns to be a flesh-and-the pan. Bánszky revealed on his 28th birthday last July 23, "I want to be in this industry for a long time," he said in an interview. "There's a lot I'd like to accomplish. I want to do drama, comedy, action."

She explained why he was often mistaken as deaf: "I am not a documentary person. Even when I am happy about something, I am not able to shout or cight away. That's why sometimes people think I do not appreciate things done for me. I have to work on being more ex-

BC CONCEPCION is ready-to-be Yehey Foundation's wards.

pressive," (We're watching!)

Storytelling with BC

"Mga Inagkwi" BC Concepcion is the reigning storyteller for Hesbon Foundation's ward on Aug. 14 at the Enchanted Kingdom in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

The foundation is an NGO that aims to children in need of special protection, chose abandoned, abused, exploited, neglected, orphaned, or prone to is one of the largest private, non-sectarian child-caring institutions in Manila.

Other celebrity attendees for the month: Ramon Gonzales, Aug. 1; Mark Gil, Aug 7; Dennis Hendricks, Aug. 8; Rita Corona, Aug 10; Hilah Hewes, Aug. 21; Rina Aquino, Aug. 22; Jenny Ferrer, Aug. 25; and Ms. Earth 2009 Kris Psycle Rivera, Aug. 29. RSVP with to attendance at 4 p.m. at Gilda's Feast.

RUSHES SPECIAL

Most lovable

LOS Angeles...The cats and dogs of "Cats & Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore" come from a long and lovable tradition of live-action animal movies. Here are five that deserve two paws up:

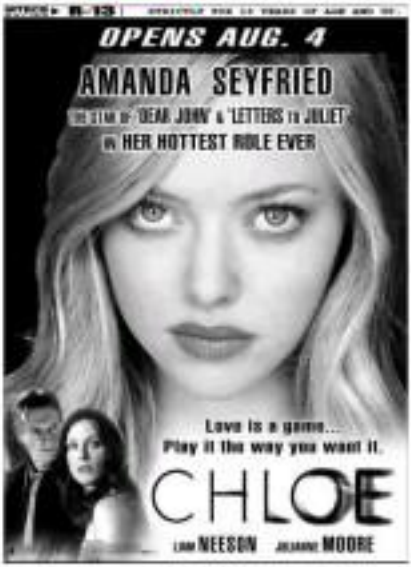
1) "Babe" (1995): This movie about a talking pig got seven Oscar nods, including Best Picture and Best Supporting Actor for James Cromwell. (It won for visual effects.)

2) "My Dog Skip" (2000): His way to get through this thing without howling...for 6-year-old preteen Willie Morris (Bryan Brown) is his constant companion and best friend. So imagine the cute Frankie Muniz as the 9-year-old boy, the idea of a dog being your only real friend when you're a lonely kid, and of course, Skip, a lovable, scruffy Jack Russell terrier.

3) "Lassie Come Home" (1943): The dog is possessed of such extraordinary navigational skills, she can find her way from Scotland to Yorkshire. Manageable, yes, but still-believable.

4) "The Black Stallion" (1979): That Arabian horse can swim, run, do amazing tricks, save your life—but he is not all-powerful. He needs help, but he is one of us, mostly. But the fundamental story is what's crucial. That of a bond between a boy and a horse.

5) "Every Which Way But Loose" (1978): Goofy, but kinda irresistible. You have to love Clint Eastwood teaming with his rough-guy image by playing...a rough guy whose best friend is an orangutan.



LEARNING

Ultra-Chido Band Formoso

Email: learning@inquire.com.ph

New series: 'The Legend of the Pony's Tears'

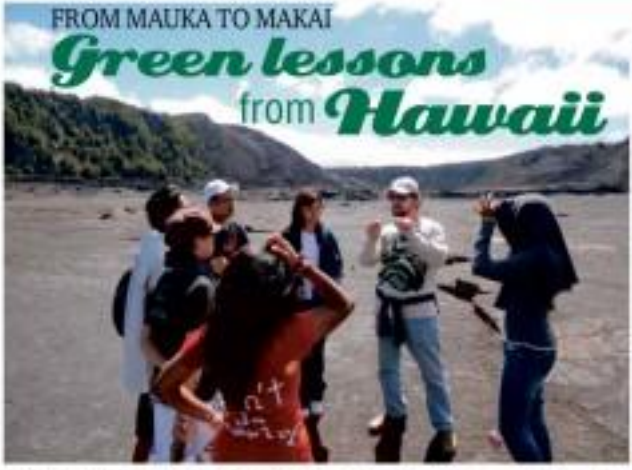
Bench is again donating free copies of lessons to selected Grades 5 and 6 classes to make available to young readers the story "The Legend of the Pony's Tears," which will be serialized on 10 Mondays in this section.

Teachers who have signed up for this program and received confirmation from us must attend our Learning with Inquirer workshop on Wednesday, Aug. 4.

Sorry, no workshop, no free lessons copies. Text or call (0922) 8182942 or (0918) 3024066 for more information.

FROM MAUKA TO MAKAI

Green lessons from Hawaii



SUMMER IN THE USA: (clockwise from above) Asian students about to plant seedlings along the marshland of Chesapeake Bay in Maryland; the author with a Bornean student and friend Ng. Hermina Morka; exploring volcanic activity/discovery of Hawaii Prof. John Casnick

By Ramon Lorenzo Luis R. Quirez
Contributor

IT WAS 5 a.m. and, while the sun was still asleep in the horizon, the Kilauea—the world's most active volcano—continued to emit a grey sulfuric miasma.

As part of native Hawaiian protocol, we paused on the 4 a.m. to offer food (ti leaves) as sacrificing to Pele, the volcano goddess, to seek her permission to enter the crater. We sang a song chronicling the birth of the eight major Hawaiian islands, a hymn that seemed to please the deity. We also chanted if she is the one called "woke up" and emerged from behind the clouds.

Two days before that, we snorkeled in the pristine waters of Mauna Kea beach, the iconic white beach between the mighty outlet of the Kingdom of Hawaii, built a terrible complex in order to gain the favor of the gods and Kihei Hooku. That was my first time to snorkel, and to see a live green turtle at a distance of six feet, I thought I even saw the humuhumunukunukuapua'a, the fish with a name longer than itself (it's the state triggerfish, official fish of the state of Hawaii), playing among the corals and seaweeds.

These were scenes from my recent trip towards the mountains and makai (towards the west) summer in Hawaii, a group of islands in the center of the Pacific Ocean that is the 50th state of the United States.

Thanks to the kindness of the United States Institute for Student Leaders on Global Environmental Issues (ISEI), 28 Asian students had the opportunity to learn about the global environment and reflect on their own countries' environment, culture, history, and other aspects.

I was among five Filipinos chosen by the US Embassy through a competitive process to participate in the program funded by the US State Department. We joined students from Burma (Myanmar), Malaysia, and Thailand, who were also selected by the American embassies there.

Our aims: "to develop young leaders with the ability to build and maintain resilient communities in light of global environmental challenges." It is organized by the Hawaii-based East-West Center, an education and research institution that aims to strengthen relations and understanding among peoples and nations of Asia, the Pacific and the US.

The other Filipinos in the group were John Dale Elenida, geology major, University of the Philippines Diliman; Reinaerie Madronio Jr., special education major, Xavier University Cagayan de Oro City; Ronald Ringor, chemical engineering student, Saint Louis University Baguio City; and Robert William Tan, physics major, Silliman University Dumaguete City.

Everyone has a role

For five weeks, we listened to lectures, engaged in debates, went on trips, talked about our countries, and visited various sites in Oahu and the Big Island such as the Halemaumau National Park, State Capitol, and Honolulu's waste-to-energy plant, as well as government agencies like the US Environmental Protection Agency and the US Capitol in Washington D.C. during the final week.

"I've realized we chemical engineers also have a role in preserving the environment," Ronald said when we discussed how engineers could protect, or sometimes destroy, the environment.

The composition of the class was testament to the interdisciplinary nature of environmental work. Most of us were environmental science majors, but there were also students of history, education, information technology and other fields.

Malaysian Bee was a photographer, writer, painter, and videographer while 19-year-old Kaw from Burma trained teachers twice her age in English and the environment.

Then we rolled in an elephant bus, pun in Thailand, as we jokingly called her our beloved Elephant Mother. The young number made us all cry during one session when she asked, "Why don't we eat humans like the elephant?" The question made us realize how badly we had manipulated, or worse, exploited and destroyed nature.

The two motivational speakers—Pol Issra Thailand and Jojo Jacinto—stressed proof that human health and the environment were interconnected and inseparable. Aware of the impact of environmental problems on health, I said it was cruel to tell people how pollution and climate change would affect their lives.

The rock music-loving John Dale said the program sparked his interest in energy policy. "We studied petroleum and coal in geology class, but now I understand how important policy-making is in pushing for a shift to renewables like solar or geothermal (energy)."

From one of our book assignments, "Plan B 4.0" by eminent sustainable development advocate Lester Brown, we learned that we needed just one-eighth of the world's total annual military budget to address global environment, oil, health, and education issues.

Connections

We saw in Hawaii the considerable connection among nature and culture, environment and community. For the Hawaiians, as revealed in their legends and chants, the environment was a father with many wives, one of which gave birth to the islands. In short, as Lilo told Stitch in the Disney movie, they all belonged to an ohana (family).

We realized our traditional practices such as bayanihan acknowledging the culture. To maintain the status (temple's mana) is preserve the mana (essence). To appreciate the Kilauea was to worship Pele. To conserve the lanai trees was to have an abundance (movement).

From our speaker Diamond we learned that captured this principle into cultural conservation.

I thought about our history and realized our ancestors regarded the environment in the same way as Hawaiians did. Maybe Filipinos should review this attitude towards the environment—one that did not defile and destroy but rather respected and protected.

"And it starts with massive education at the grassroots," Romey, the educator, kept reporting.

After four weeks in Hawaii and one week in Washington D.C., I could say Year 5 lived up to expectations. It was a holistic introduction to the culture and society of the US, in general, and Hawaii in particular, a unique program in team leadership skills, and an informative and enlightening review and analysis of the myriad challenges faced by our planet, as well as a sharing of ideas for possible solutions.

More than ever, I am inspired and committed to work and speak for the conservation of our environment.

Although we were sad to leave Hawaii, we were also filled with hope, eager to share the lessons we learned from mauka to makai, from the mountains to the seas, of Hawaii with our own people back home.

(The author, a math-year medical student at the University of the Philippines Manila-Philippine General Hospital, is the founder of UP Dos Equis.)

THE SUN: Class of 2010 turns it up in the Japanese pit-stops of Hawaii's East-West Center

Your Future as A Teacher is About to Turn A Page

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FILIPINO Fascinators in Washington D.C. with the US Capitol as backdrop

Playgrounds for the MIND

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Member Schools

AMA upgrades equipment in 18 Cisco Local Networking Academies nationwide

AMA UNIVERSITY, a member school of the AMA Education System (AMAES), Asia's pioneer and largest network of universities and colleges, was one of the first schools appointed by Cisco Systems as a Regional Academy Leading Academy in the Philippines to deliver ICT-related education courses to colleges and universities. Today Cisco Regional Academy AMA University has one of the biggest number of Cisco Local Academies (23 AMA campuses) offering the Cisco Networking Academy (CNA) Program and officially authorized to administer exams for industry-wide certifications recognized worldwide. Very recently AMAES president and CEO, Dr. Jonathan C. Aguilar, Sr., mandated the upgrade of Cisco laboratory equipment and computers in 18 AMA campuses to Cisco Local Academies running CNA Exploration 4.0 software. The five other Cisco academies' equipment upgrade will also soon follow.

The CNA courses cover a range of topics from basic networking design and theory to network security and advanced troubleshooting tools. 21st century skills such as problem solving, critical thinking and collaboration are integrated into the curricula to help learners create opportunities for students. It utilizes a blended learning model that combines face-to-face teaching with engaging online content and hands-on learning activities to help students prepare for industry-standard certifications, entry-level and advanced careers, and higher education in engineering, computer science, information systems and related fields. Academies gain access to standards-based courses that support core academics and align to in-demand job skills and globally recognized certifications.

The 18 Local Academies have received their new 2960 series Cisco Lab bundle including wireless kits for the Cisco CCNA (Associate) and CCNA Exploration courses.

LPU FS students pass Civil Service Exams

STUDENTS and Alumni from courses of the Philippines University (LPU) College of International Relations (CIR) were among the esteemed list of passers of the April 2010 Civil Service Professional Eligibility Examinations. Current graduates of the 40 Foreign Service programs include Rhea Sarenas-Lemoncito, Elaine De Guzman, Paloma Delos Reyes, Mariel Ann Ramos-Nicolas, Jasmin Jacinto, Ian Jimenez, Maria-Irene Mary Lansina, Marialle Roley Manicade, Ricardo Benjamin Osorio, Gladdi Yhonnie Ramirez, Bentlee Paolo Santiago, Karlo Ray Tanudra, Abigail Tirong, Veronica Tungcoa and Jea Rose Villacorta. Among the roll of alumni passers were: Mari Clendonne Meena, Flomell Doris Solicon, Christia Stephanie Ann Estrella, Krista Mavey De Rosario, Jose Belen Dela Cruz, Ma. Aurilene Manor, Joyce Aileen Ye Sinonsora and Ronny Nihal Villaverde. The aim of the Civil Service Examinations is to establish a register of eligible individuals from which appointment to the first and second-level positions in the civil service shall be made.

Dr. Talisayon is new PWU academic head

TOP EDUCATOR and author Dr. Valeo Talisayon has been appointed vice president for academic affairs of the Philippine Women's University by its board of trustees led by chairperson Dr. Helena Z Benitez. A Philippine-trained scholar who completed her secondary education as valedictorian in 1961, Talisayon is also known for an impressive record of graduation and academic administrative Prize to her new appointment, she won College of Education deans of the University of the Philippines where she earned the degree of B.S. Physics (the feeble a**2 in Science Education from Cornell University, USA. A TOWNS i The Outstanding Women in the Nations Service awardee in 1989, she has written and co-authored seven books, published dozens of technical articles in local and foreign publications and participated in international conferences in physics and science education. As VP for academic affairs, Talisayon drafted a 10-point agenda, three of which are to re-engineer the academic programs responsive to market demands and reflective of international trends; strengthen the PWU pioneering programs and creations of new ones; and institutionalization of on-line and distance education programs.

UB, a Center of Excellence in the country

THE UNIVERSITY of Batangas has been accorded the distinction of being a Center of Excellence (COE) in Teacher Education by the Commission on Higher Education. This honor is the first ever to be given to any schools at institutions in the region of Southern Tagalog. The Center of Excellence, the UB College of Education is fully recognized as a unit with outstanding graduate programs and an undergraduate program that meets international standards of academic quality and excellence. This is an additional accolade given to the university after the conferment of Autonomous Status by the same body. The University of Batangas is thus recognized to be the hub of academic and human resource development at both the regional and national levels. The University of Batangas remains steadfast in its quest to provide the best education for the entire region.

Dutch professor visits UPHSD campuses

A PHILIPPINE writer and professor of historic encounters from Netherlands gave a seminar-workshop to faculty and non-teaching personnel of University of Perpetual Help System DALTA-Molino and Las Piñas campuses at the Function Room of the College of International Hospitality and Management Building. The speaker, Professor Gualbert Leonard Obbard Berckmoes gave the audience a comprehensive lecture on political, socio-economic and ecological issues that pose a threat to global security. His extensive knowledge on world history provided the audience with insight on the relevance of current political developments to their day-to-day existence. It lacked issues on Islamic terrorism, proliferation of ABC weapons, Moslems Settlements powers, Asian trade international crime, regional crisis, Middle East, Europe and water scarcity, global pandemic and demographic problems. Professor Berckmoes is a visiting lecturer to De University of Perpetual Help System Dalta, Dasmeña, Las Piñas and Molino campuses. He is an author of several books on international politics. The seminar is one of the activities sponsored by the university that prepares its students to increase their awareness on the socio-political developments confronting Filipinos here and abroad.

Army Foundation, UM forge partnership

ARMY Foundation Inc. represented by business tycoon Ambassador Antonio M. Yao, chairman of the board of Philippine Business Bank (PBB), forged a partnership with University of Mindanao (UM), represented by its president Dr. Guillermo P. Torres Jr., recently. The partnership aims to assist and provide scholarship financial opportunities to financially disadvantaged but deserving and qualified students of UM in the form of scholarships.

FEU-EAC fetes CE topnotchers, board passers

THE FAR Eastern University - East Asia College (FEU-EAC) congratulates Jonas Rose Bagana and Enrico Miguel Celestial for placing 2nd and 9th respectively in the September 2010 Civil Engineering Board Exams. Jonas Hyde Pagana had a rating of 84.2 percent while Enrico Miguel Celestial had a rating of 82 percent. Aside from the two topnotchers, FEU-EAC also produced 21 new civil engineers from its ranks this year. "FEU East Asia College is known for its outstanding course offerings on Engineering and Computer Studies. We are proud to name two of our Engineering students at the top of the board exams. It is a testament to the quality education at FEU - EAC, " executive director Genaro Tan stated.

First Asia opens 4th North Batangas Open League

FIRST ASIA Institute of Technology and Humanities (FAITH) in Tanauan City, Batangas announces the opening of the 4th North Batangas Open League (NBOL) on July 30. The NBOL is one of the major sports activities being hosted by First Asia Institute for this school year. Different schools from the Calabarzon region will compete in different events which include Basketball (Men and Women), Volleyball (Men and Women) and Volleyball - High School Division (Boys and Girls). First Asia Institute welcomes its personnel to the different sports in the region. One of the upcoming sport events is the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) South opens on Sept. 8.

ROTARY TOURISM PERSONALITY AWARDEE

The Rotary Club of Manila PCGC (for distinct and exigent public service, more 11, Juan Ponce, Of Batangueño San Jacinto) other noteworthy academic affairs and president of Tourism Educators of the Philippines (TEAM Phil), president of the Volunteer Inspectors Personality Award. In the Province to receive

receiving the prestigious award from Dr. Ruben Lim Joseph, senior executive chair, and vice president Ben Santos, in simple ceremonies held during a recent Rotary Club luncheon meeting at the Tai Pan room, Manila Polo Club.

Enrenga University Foundation reaps 3rd COD

THE MARIKO, D. Enrenga University Foundation name a Center for Development (COD) award for the third time. The College of Information Technology got the first COD grant followed by the College of Criminology. A Center of Development (COD) recognition is given to a teacher education program within a higher education institution that demonstrates the potential to become a Center of Excellence in the future. As a recipient of this award, the College of Education of Manuel S. Enrenga University will be given priority in the selection of CHED institutional partners for the nomination's development projects. The department will also be entitled to other non-monetary subsidies and awards such as faculty scholarships for graduate studies and priority in CHED research grants.

Retail confab encourages student entrepreneurship

THE PHILIPPINE Retailers Association (PRA) believes that students are key to continuing the growth of entrepreneurship in the country. As tomorrow's retailers and entrepreneurs, PRA officials say students can learn from experts on retail innovation, social media, customer behavior and trends, customer's reading, wealth management and best practices in HR at the upcoming 18th National Retail Conference and Stores Asia Expo (NRCE). Graduating students may avail of a special rate of P1,000 to attend the 2-day conference in place of the regular conference rate of P1,900. Open to graduating business, marketing and entrepreneurship students who can presently be called the 18th NRCE will be held on Aug. 11-12 at the SMX Convention Center, Bay Boulevard, Pasay City. Pre-registration is now open for graduating students. Themed "The Roadmap to Retail Growth in the New Decade", NRCE is the biggest retail industry event in the country. The 2-day conference and 3-day expo is attended by over 5000 retail owners, CEOs and top level executives all over the country. Complimentary full registration for the instructor or dean of the college for group registrations is also available. Registration deadline is on Aug. 4. For more event details, log on to www.nrcph.com or call 981-4100 to 09

A seminar in UE tackles hybrid library

THE BRIGHTEST of the East Library Science Alumni Association Inc. (ELSAA), in cooperation with the UE Graduate School, will present a seminar on "Hybrid Library for the New Generation of Library Users" on Friday, Aug. 12, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the International Room, 2nd Floor, College of Arts and Sciences Building, Recto Campus. Librarians, library and information professionals, library staffers and LIS (library information science) students appropriate knowledge for them to become aware of the nature, characteristics, collection and other unique features of a hybrid library; understand the roles of a hybrid library in the information value chain; and identify the degree of overlap between electronic duties and traditional duties in a hybrid library. Dr. Jean D. Buenviaje, library director of Mapua University, is the resource speaker. He teaches library science at the UE Graduate School and College of Arts and Sciences-Manila. The seminar will provide the general assembly by the members and officers of the ELSAA. For other details, call or e-mail Jhenaida Macalam, 631-0639 local 180 or jhenaida@yahoo.com; Ady Diego, 735-6401 loc. 391 or lady@yahoo.com; Joy Nieves, 736-0471 loc. 410 or jboy_y@yahoo.com.

2010 top three Thomasian pharmacists

THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas takes pride and congratulates three of its graduates from the Faculty of Pharmacy who are among the top ten board passers for the June 2010 Pharmacist Licensure Examination. Samuel T. Go for who ranks 8th place has a rating of 80.25 percent. Thelia Mia A. Pilark's rating the 7th place with a rating of 80.50 percent, and Ryan Conway R. Ang in the place with 80.40 percent rating. Also, with the other 270 new Thomasian Pharmacists, the university has the percentage passing of 69 percent. Again, congratulations to the board passers and may you continue to be "endowed with (God's) unending grace" to be competent, committed and compassionate Thomasians!

Informatics upgrades to latest software

INFORMATICS PHILIPPINES remains at the cutting edge of information technology education by upgrading its software and training to the latest to automated design and drafting: AutoCAD 2011 edition. AutoCAD, short for Automated Computer Aided Design, is the de facto standard for creating, documenting, and presenting two-dimensional and three-dimensional designs. It is preferred by engineers, architects, and designers who create schematics and models of everything from the largest skyscrapers to the smallest car components, from the latest furniture to the most popular shampoo bottles. Informatics Philippines, a global IT school, has offered AutoCAD since Expressed in terms the late nineties. Through the years, Informatics' top-quality education and excellent facilities have helped its college and professional students improve their designing capabilities and become engineering and architectural leaders. With the latest edition of AutoCAD, their automated design courses at Informatics will be ever more powerful, with increased capabilities and compatibility with the latest operating systems and documentation software. "We are consistently in the leading edge of technology," says Leo S. Nilagan, Informatics President and CEO. "Our branches in commercial areas, like the Megamall branch, are now offering the latest in AutoCAD. This is a great help to engineers and architects who want world-class skills to be employed abroad."

Success in math Olympiad

(Second of two parts)

LAST MONTH, all the members of our Philippine team to the International Mathematics Olympiad (IMO) came home with honors.

At the 51st IMO in Astana, Kazakhstan, in July, Gemerola sensation Leo of St. Jude Catholic School got a silver medal, while Henry Jefferson Moore of Chiang Kai Shek College and Cheng Kong Wu of Cambridge Chiang Hua High School received honorable mentions.

San Juan native of the Ateneo de Manila University math department was team leader, while Cleo Mackenzie Ong, former IMO contestant, was deputy team leader.

Last week, you read about how the rigorous training program, coupled with the drive of the students, paid off in the IMO, the most prestigious math fest for high school students in the world.

Now let us look to the future and discuss what else needs to be done to repeat and sustain this award-winning performance.

Supporters

Various sectors have stepped up and to make the undertaking a success. The Philippine team was supported by the Science Education Institute of the Department of Science and Technology headed by Jose Ogena, herself a mathematician; the Mathematical Society of the Philippines headed by Fidel Nemenzo of the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman, and this Ateneo math department and its Problem-solving Program.

The team would like to thank C & E Publishing, the Mathematics Trainers Guild, and the Mathematics Teachers Association of the Philippines.

Various sectors were involved in the training by Alva Benedicto of the Ateneo; Jeff Tolentino, Ivy Barcelon of Miriam International Banking System, and Jojo Isidro and Rinsley Tabares of the Ateneo.

Help for future teams

What else can be done to help future teams? "First the trainees from rooting down during summer," Garcia says. "so they can concentrate on problem solving and math. Dare trainers really sacrificed a lot in this preparation. Resources, less at least the reality was good."

"Make the summer training like an ongoing camp, so there would be more time throughout the day for math," Leo says. "This will also enable us centralize to outside our trainers 24/7 and have more time to retreat and discuss with our fellow trainers ... adequate funding will be needed and the trainers have to be compensated, since they will be sacrificing their jobs and pay to train us students ..."

"Conduct online math sessions by sending students math problems," Cheng says. "Make an online group and invite schools from all over the country to join. Then e-mail the problems, at least one per week, to the students. In time, I believe the students will get better."

"Moral support," Garcia says. "Our contestants are among the very few students in the country who like math. They belong to a special group of math lovers, so we need to take care of them."

The IMO is certainly not all work and no play. "Kazakhstan is beautiful!" says Cheng. "Our team enjoyed Astana, the capital, which is still considered a new city. For me, the architecture is delightful."

It was the first time to see such artistic buildings with curved bodies," Garcia says. Ong observes that many of the structures are being created from museums, palaces, and towers.

For another, the people are very friendly. "Even though there is a language barrier, the people are very good hosts," Garcia says.

Most impressive is the people's "patriotic enthusiasm," as Marco puts it. "The people love their country and their president with so fervent a passion that it shows in almost every thing."

Ong agrees. "That's how the president can stay in power for nearly 20 years."

Success is within reach

"Success in the IMO is not as hard as everyone believes," says Ong, himself a former IMO award winner. "Exposure and effort are key and, thus, we need training for younger students. Many good students spend countless hours doing math or weekends and summers. We often they are given IMO type questions, they are rattled as they have not been exposed to those types of questions.

"After being trained in the necessary skills, students can typically win honorable mentions and bronze medals already."

Dong agrees. "After joining the IMO, I realized that the easiest problems were solvable at our country's current level. As long as you're good in geometry you have a chance in the IMO. Make sure you can solve those two problems, and you will have a chance of getting a medal."

"Nothing is impossible if you have faith in God and in your capabilities," Leo says. "No matter how dismal the situation may look, there will always be someone people who are willing to help to the best of their abilities, so you should help yourself as well."

"Never stop believing," Bernice says. "Never stop trying."

Ong says, "In the IMO, we discover that the world we live in is filled with many talented people who are willing to help us become the best we can be. Let us not forget to thank them."

E-mail the author at blessbsd@yahoo.com.

Student essay contest on sustainable construction

CEMEX Philippines Inc. is launching this month the Holcim Journalism Awards for Sustainable Construction in two categories: Media and Students.

The awards will recognize outstanding stories on sustainable construction. Entries should be about projects, concepts, technologies, details and research studies relating to sustainable construction, one of the main advocacies of the company.

The students category is open to all college students in any Philippine tertiary educational institution.

Entries must be submitted on or before Oct. 20. Articles should be original and should not have been printed in any school or media publication. Information from secondary resources must be properly attributed.

The media category is open to all Filipino print journalists, who may join the contest on their own or be nominated by their editors.

Articles may be in English or Filipino, must be original, published, and published between Aug. 1, 2010, and May 31, 2011. They may be about past, ongoing or planned projects, concepts, technologies, trends, or research and studies involving sustainable construction.

The project supports the ongoing regional search, Holcim Award for Sustainable Construction, of the Switzerland-based Holcim Foundation. Now in its third year, the global competition recognizes projects and visions contributing to a more sustainable environment.

The entries will be evaluated by a multi-sectoral panel of from businesses, academe and nongovernment sectors. Winners get cash prizes and go on visits to sustainable project sites in Asia Pacific.

Sustainable construction refers to the practice of investing investments in ways that are environmentally responsible and make efficient use of natural resources.

The Holcim Award for Sustainable Construction also has a Main and New Generation (Students) categories.

The Main Category is open to architects, planners, engineers, project owners, construction firms and builders. The Next Generation category will document student projects in university programs done in the students' final years as bachelor's, master's or Ph.D. level.

Entries for both categories must be submitted online at www.holcimawards.ph by March 25, 2011.

Entries may consist of sustainable building and civil engineering works, landscape, urban design and infrastructure projects and materials, products and construction technologies.

The competition will have five regional contests. Winners will participate in the 2012 global competition.

Professionally experienced architects and academic professionals will screen entries using five target issues in line with Holcim's triple bottom line business approach of balanced social, environmental and economic performance.

Call 4109287.

Gaviola tops 2010 graduates of maritime school in Bataan

JOSEPH MARTIN Valencia Gaviola of Makati City graduated cum laude recently from the Mariveles Campus of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) at Kamaya Point in Mariveles, Bataan.

He also received the Chairman's Saber Award for graduating No. 1 in the rugmaan Leggero of the Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) Graduates of the Noble Beast Class 2010.

Other honors he received were Language and Social Sciences Award, Mathematics and Sciences Award, and the Albert E. Garcia Unsurpassed Award for Academic Excellence.

Kairos Sister of Penglas, Bohol, who finished second, received the President's Saber Award and Combat Award.

Jovie Mae Valencia Gaviola, received the NROTC Award, Journalism Award, Special Achievement Award in Math 1, and the Albert E. Garcia Congressional Award for Academic Excellence; Joseph Christ de Vera, cum laude, got the Albert E. Garcia Congressional Award; David Milagrosa, Leadership Award; Christopher Prieto, Marine Transportation Award, Academy of Asia and the Pacific.

Harvey Reyes, Marine Engineering Award; Mark Lavalan, Shipboard Training Award for Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation; and Ashriel Gonzales, Shipboard Training Award for Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering.

Retired Vice Admiral Eduardo Ma. S. Santos is the president of the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific.

The Legazpinos Class consisted of 146 midshipmen graduates, who completed three years of academics and one year of shipboard training.

The graduates, who were granted scholarships by international shipping companies, are expected to work onboard vessels of their sponsors.

Entries to Shell students art tilt must be in Aug. 4-6

THE 2010 SHELL National Students Art Competition (SHAC) is now open.

All provincial and Metro Manila Calendar entries must be submitted on Aug. 4-6. Metro Manila entries for oil-acrylic, watercolor, sculpture and digital fine arts must be in between Aug. 20 and 28.

Participants must be currently enrolled regular college students.

Over P1 million in cash prizes are at stake. Winners will also get medals and art supplies.

Schools of first place winners will receive special grants for their faculty development programs.

The competition is open-themed, except in the Calendar category where entries must be in digital fine arts. Calendar theme is "1:11 Pilipinas," a play on the 40th anniversary of the current philosophical era, with focus on patriotism through art. Winning works that visually represent nationalistic virtues of hope, love, and peace will be featured in the 2011 corporate calendar of Pilipinas Shell.

Nine 12 years old, the SHAC is the Philippines' longest-running student art contest. The annual advocacy undertaking is underwritten by the Shell Art Investment Program that brings an established artists to the provinces for a special dialogue with students, faculty, and local art groups.

This year, multidisciplinary artist Bencapillo will hold sessions in Cebu, Davao, and the Bulacan in Mandaluyong City.

Awarding for the year's SHAC winners will be held later this year.

The 42nd Shell SHAC is also supported by Art21, 3M Supermarks, Star Paper Corp., Shell V-Power, Shellane, Shell Helix and National Bookstore.

Contest details and official entry form may be downloaded from www.shell.com.ph/shell_art.

Students may also visit faculty offices in their respective departments/schools.

Developing child wizards

JERALOM CHRIST Wizard Academy (JCWA) opened in Bacolod City in Negros Occidental City with only nine students.

But Rebel and Rhona Hare says not discouraged, or they knew most start-up businesses had many problems to deal with.

Today their faith in their enterprise is beginning to pay dividends.

The couple hired competent administrators and qualified teachers even as they improved their management skills. They also put in the help from a bank known for helping small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs).

The Hares and Planterbank way with them through thick and thin. Rebel said they eventually suffers from bigger banks for they turned them down.

When asked by big banks why they preferred Planterbank, Rebel says "very small," he would tell them that Planterbank gave them "more action than talk."

The Hares had been receiving positive feedback about their school, inspiring them to aspire to become one of the best schools in Central Visayas.

Before classes start, guest students personally every morning and interacts with the kids, encouraging them to give their best and to do something good for the country. He said he encouraged them to be more competitive in their faith and to always make their parents happy.

SHAC (SM Aura scene (above) are all-confidence students enjoy reading in the school library (left)

On its 10th anniversary last year, the school reaffirmed its commitment to always be "A School of Whole Smiles and Shared Goodness."

Rebel said he learned over the years that education was very subtle: leading others can only lead to self. his/her products at a good price.

Becoming a school, he said, was more challenging as they had to deal with emotions, and they had to present the whole package of quality, service, and price (Curious). Personal touch was also needed.

The school's newest slogan, in line with "Touching Lives, Hearts", derived from Hare's mission of LTLH.

Shalom Crest now has a faculty and staff close to 70 and can accommodate up to 800 students.

Part of the school's name was taken from the name of the couple's youngest daughter, Sofia Shalom, Hebrew for peace. Crest means summit or peak.

JCWA has a progressive and responsive school curriculum, good teacher-student ratio and class size, personalized approach to students' needs and parents' concern, accessible location, affordable rates, and family-friendly payment schemes.

It has modern facilities, including libraries laboratories for science, speech and computer, football park, basketball court, wall rock climbing facility, library with internet access, artistry effect, cafeteria and store hall, air-conditioned classrooms, and Home Economics Livelihood Education (Hele) Room.

Shalom Crest will soon have a complete high school, with the opening of fourth year classes.

Shalom Crest Wizard Academy Inc. is on Salvani Street, Taloga Subdivision, Bacolod. Telefax: 433-3527/371.

MPI HONORS SCHOLARS FOR SY 2010-11

The MPI Technological Institutes (MPITI), formerly Meralco Foundation Institute, honored its 324 student(s) this school year during the 38th Scholars' Day rites at the MPI gym on Ortigas Avenue in Pasig City. Seated (L-R) are MPI officials Ed De Guzzo, technical management department; Marian S. Whitmore, educational support services; Mauchigar Santos, vice president; Col. Alex T. Escalo, president; Charles Valencia, training management; and Arnulfo D. Dalisi, people and enterprise development. Standing are awardees (L-R) Daniel L. Flores, Jairah Arch Arola, John Joseph Zapanta, Denise Jo Arroyo, Jenelyn Rivera, Kevin Llaneras, John Ray Cajayon, John Andrew Llorca, Gharwin Encina and Bernadge A. de Leon.

Know your ABC—the vitamins, not the alphabet—and win

Text and photos by Penelope P. Pedroche

THE DEPARTMENT of Education has partnered with Kraft Foods Philippines to make nutrition education fun and exciting for students.

To mark Nutrition Month, which was last month, DepEd and Kraft launched the "1st Kraft Cheez Whiz Palaisnuman, a nationwide interschool competition among grade school students that aims to put in the run their nutrition literacy and mental and physical skills.

The cheez pan competition includes such activities as choral reading, essay writing, cheer dance, mass and kid sandwich-making and pandalasang or pot art.

DepEd and Kraft developed Palaisnuman to promote good nutrition among young Filipinos. Statistics show that some eight million Filipino children suffer from micronutrient malnutrition or undernutrition.

The first elimination round in Metro Manila was held in Tipas Elementary School in Tipas, Taguig City.

This is the first time DepEd has partnered with a food company for a series of activities to promote nutrition education, according to organizers.

"The Department of Education welcomes this opportunity to bring nutrition to an educational way," said Evangelina Ladines, assistant schools division superintendent of Taguig City.

Nyna principal Cheryl Fernando said the contest for the event "an extension of learning about proper nutrition."

Alex Dan Tiodoro, category manager for cheese and spreads office of Kraft Foods Philippines, said while several activities were held up for August, National Language Month, and September, Summer Month, few events were organized to mark Nutrition Month.

"That is why we wanted to divert ... our program to schools in an enjoyable and educational way," he said.

Finals for the Palaisnuman will be in September with each of the country's 17 regions fielding a contestant.

Winners in each category will receive P5,000 each.

"These schoolchildren are at the stage where they are developing a sense of responsibility," Paulo Serrano, brand manager of Cheez Whiz, Kraft Foods Philippines, explained. "That is why we want them to realize the importance of proper nutrition through a series of fun, creative and learning activities."

Tiodoro said, in fact, over 200 schools had signed up for Palaisnuman. Other schools may register online at http://palaisnuman.com.

A GRADE 5 student and his "gardenmore," School of Nutrition

CHEEZ WHIZ brand manager Serrano

MOMOTHERS show their appreciation through hugs and kisses.

Helping 'young seeds grow into sturdy trees'

THE TZU CHI Foundation distributed recently basic school supplies for elementary, secondary and college students.

A total of 955 indigent elementary, high school and college students in Cavite and the cities of Marikina and Manila received Tzu Chi bags containing notebooks, writing pads, pencils or ball pens, pencil cases and crayons.

Tzu Chi volunteers also visited Dasmariñas, Bacoor, Cavite, and Dalahican, Cavite City.

In Dasmariñas, which the foundation has been helping since 2007, volunteers handed the children, clipped their fingernails, distributed clear clothes and school uniforms, and gave free haircuts.

A program was held later at Sto. Cristo Elementary School (SES) for 392 grade and high school students of Dasmariñas who were promoted certificates of educational assistance and school supplies.

Dasmariñas, which is near the shores of Bacoor and serves as a dumpsite, has a community composed of about 900 families.

In Dalahican, Tzu Chi volunteers assisted 232 elementary and secondary students.

Judith Ramos, principal of Dalahican Elementary School where the distribution of school supplies was held, thanked the foundation.

"Tzu Chi started helping Dalahican through a relief mission after a fire in March that affected more than 600 indigent families.

The various initiatives for the benefit of schoolchildren are in line with the statement of Tzu Chi Foundation founder Dharma Master Cheng Yen that "it is important to provide a wholesome environment for a young seed to grow into a sturdy tree."

THE RURAL PAINTING team in colorful smocks and bandannas

LSGH joins drive for mercury-free schools

LA SALLE Green Hills (LSGH) has launched a campaign to eliminate mercury from its premises.

LSGH has partnered with the environmental group Ban Toxics! (BT) for the Mercury-Free Schools Program. Launched in 2008, the program seeks to rid all elementary and high schools in the Philippines of mercury to reduce risks to health and environment.

Mercury is a potent neurotoxin that can adversely affect developing brains and cause problems like attention deficit and impairment of motor, memory and language skills, among others.

Growing children, the unborn from and pregnant women are most susceptible to the ill effects of mercury.

LSGH is the latest school to join the BT initiative. It plans to conduct informative education activities for students and staff members, as well as mercury audits. It will also replace mercury-containing equipment with safer alternatives.

Grade school principal Jean Batiselle E. Javier said LSGH supported the Mercury-Free Schools Program because their goal "is not simply to provide learning to children, but to ensure that they are healthy and safe while with us."

He said eliminating mercury exposure of students was a priority of LSGH.

BT has released a Mercury Alternatives Handbook identifying areas in schools where mercury can be found. The handbook that may be downloaded from www.bantoxics.org also provides guidelines for managing mercury in schools:

1. Assess and audit. Identify school equipment and processes use mercury.

2. Remove and replace. Switch to safer no-mercury equipment.

3. Minimize. For equipment like fluorescents lights, with no mercury-free alternatives, choose the brand with the lowest mercury content.

4. Manage and store properly. Mercury should never be handled as regular waste. It requires special handling and storage.

5. Educate, students, teachers, staff and parents should learn the adverse effects of mercury on children.

In 2006, 13 students of St. Andrew's School in Pasahape City were hospitalized due to exposure from mercury used in a laboratory experiment.

Richard Gutierrez, BT executive director, lauded LSGH's "proactive stance." He hoped more schools—even the Department of Education—would follow its example.

Camp focuses on girls

THE DAUGHTER Guide Camp 2010 was held recently in Angeles City in Pampanga. Since 1990, the Taguese Club has organized the camp to provide an opportunity for girls aged 8-12 years to develop their talents.

Volunteer counselor underwent personal training that included managing kid campers, washing dishes and supervising activity periods.

There were a total of 38 campers from Manila, Bulacan and Pampanga. Among the campers' activities were painting a mural for the public Pampanga Elementary School, providing mob care, and making environment related signage.

During the camp, the 41 staff members, counselors and campers experienced belonging, independence, mastery of skills and sharing.

At the end of the camp, participants chose a challenge for the following year. Other. Overpass believed that they could all do better in this area.

Nick Jr. goes on preschool tour

NICKELODEON, in partnership with Pfizer's Progress Pre-School Gold, is visiting preschools in Metro Manila to launch Nick Jr.'s Play to Learn school tour.

The program aims to promote fun in learning, team spirit and physical discipline among preschool students aged 3-5.

Selected preschools get two hours of "edu-tainment." Students become teammates and teachers become playmates.

The Play to Learn visit that gives preschoolers a chance to ride their school's stairs in July-August to Colegio de Sta. Rosa, Southville International School and Makati Hope Christian School. Two more schools will be visited in September.

Preschoolers can take a cue from Nickelodeon's Nick Tunes Over Your School (NTOYS) aerosol campaign, a highly successful series of school invasions where the slime mobile visits campuses to spread the Nick cheer among students.

The Play to Learn adventure begins with a special screening of "Team Umizoomi," Nickelodeon's newest preschool 2-D and 3-D animated series about mini action heroes with mighty mathematical powers who help little kids solve big problems.

Then kids can play thrilling games patterned after popular Nick Jr. programs like "The Backyardigans," "Dr. Tran," "Kai-Lan," "Team Umizoomi" and "Yo Gabba Gabba."

Game games will enhance math skills, some will challenge sharpness of memory, but all of them will teach students about team spirit and fun in play.

For students who do not get to play the games, there will be Nickified activity booths and exciting prizes.

Kids can also expect to say "hi-ha!" to Kai-Lan or to their favorite "yellow fellow," Spongebob Squarepants.

The school tour ends September. For more school info, see: pfizer.com.ph.

History lecture slated Aug.7 at Bestsellers

ADARNA HOUSE, Anvil Publishing and Bestsellers invite social science teachers and history enthusiasts to "Learning is on the Pond: A Lecture on Teaching and Reading History" at 11-4 p.m. on Aug. 7 at the mezzanine of Bestsellers, 4/F Robinson's Galleria, Ortigas corner Ortigas, Quezon City.

National Historical Institute chief Ambeth Ocampo will open the lecture with "Teaching History as a Perspective." Dr. Grace Peters, former president of the Philippine Historical Association, will share her and intriguing bits about Philippine historical controversies.

The lecture is open to the public. Simply buy any Adarna House reference book from Bestsellers Robinson's Galleria to register.

Call 9170648 local 127 or e-mail ncpe@adarna.com.ph.

CHILDREN'S BOOK DAY MARKED

PHILIPPINE Board on Books for Young People (PBBY) has partnered with fast-food chain Jollibee for this year's celebration of National Children's Book Day. During the signing of the partnership agreement at Pinoy Pavilion, they held a storytelling session to market kids how much fun and worthwhile reading children's books can be. Students of Pinyal Salazar Elementary School, who attended the session, also received an art colouring Filipino children's books. Jollibee will promote reading primarily through Jollibee Kids Club. PBBY is a private, nonprofit organization committed to the development of children's literature in the Philippines. It declared Children's Book Day commemorates the anniversary of the publication of Jose Rizal's children's novel "The Monkey and the Turtle."